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CINNAMON-SWIRLED BANANA LOAF

This is banana bread like you've never seen it. Fantastically fluffy with a boost from Platinum® Yeast from Red Star®, this lofty loaf bread receives a hearty addition of whole wheat flour and a touch of sweetness from mashed banana, both of which are complemented by a warm cinnamon-sugar swirl.

Makes 1 (8½x4½-inch) loaf

- **2 cups (255 grams) bread flour, divided**
- **1⅔ cups (207 grams) stone-ground whole wheat flour**
- **1 (0.25-ounce) package (7 grams) Platinum Yeast**
- **1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) kosher salt**
- **¾ cup (180 grams) warm water (120°F/49°C to 130°F/54°C)**
- **2 tablespoons (28 grams) plus 2 teaspoons (10 grams) unsalted butter, melted and divided**
- **2 tablespoons (42 grams) honey**
- **½ cup (114 grams) mashed ripe banana***
- **¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar**
- **1½ teaspoons (3 grams) ground cinnamon**
- **1 large egg (50 grams)**
- **1 tablespoon (15 grams) water**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together 1¼ cups (159 grams) bread flour, whole wheat flour, yeast, and salt by hand. Add ¾ cup (180 grams) warm water, 2 tablespoons (28 grams) melted butter, and honey; using the paddle attachment, beat at low speed until dough comes together. Cover and let stand for 15 minutes.

2. Add ½ cup (64 grams) bread flour and banana to dough. Switch to the dough hook attachment. Beat at low speed until dough is smooth, elastic, and slightly tacky, 10 to 12 minutes; add up to remaining ¼ cup (32 grams) bread flour, 1 tablespoon (8 grams) at a time, if dough is too sticky. Shape dough into a smooth ball.

3. Lightly oil a large bowl. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, 30 to 45 minutes.

4. Spray an 8½x4½-inch loaf pan with cooking spray. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.

5. In a small bowl, stir together sugar and cinnamon.

6. Punch down dough, and let stand for 10 to 15 minutes. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 16x7½-inch rectangle. Brush with remaining 2 teaspoons (10 grams) melted butter, leaving a ¼-inch border on one short side. Sprinkle with cinnamon sugar. Starting at short side opposite border, roll up dough, jelly roll style; pinch seam to seal. Place, seam side down, in prepared pan. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, 15 to 20 minutes.

7. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

8. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water. Using a pastry brush, gently brush top of dough with egg wash.

9. Bake until an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 200°F (93°C) to 205°F (96°C), 45 to 50 minutes, covering with foil to prevent excess browning, if necessary. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

**If using bananas from the freezer, make sure they are room temperature before adding to dough.*

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- 3 cups plus 2 tablespoons (313 grams) sifted Swan's Down® Cake Flour
- ⅓ cup (67 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon (2 grams) kosher salt
- ¾ cup (108 grams) dried sweetened cranberries
- 2 tablespoons (22 grams) finely chopped candied ginger
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) lightly packed orange zest
- ¼ cup (57 grams) chilled, cubed unsalted butter
- 1 cup (240 grams) plus 1 tablespoon (15 grams) cold heavy whipping cream, divided
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams)
- 2 teaspoons (12 grams) sanding sugar

PREHEAT oven to 400°F (200°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

SIFT together flour, granulated sugar, baking powder and salt in a large bowl. Stir in cranberries, ginger and orange zest. Using a pastry blender or two forks, cut in butter until crumbly. Gradually add 1 cup (240 grams) cream, stirring with a fork until dry ingredients are moistened.

KNEAD flour mixture gently on a lightly floured surface, 4 to 6 times, just until dough comes together. Divide dough in half. Pat each half into a 1-inch thick circle (about 5 inches wide). If desired, use a rolling pin to level top. Using a bench scraper or a thin-bladed knife, cut the circle into 6 wedges to form scones; place them 2 inches apart on baking sheet.

WHISK together egg yolk and remaining 1 tablespoon (15 grams) cream in a small bowl. Brush tops of scones with egg wash and sprinkle with sanding sugar.

BAKE 15 to 17 minutes or until lightly golden brown. Serve warm.

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AT THE RISK OF MASSIVE UNDERSTATEMENT, 2020 WAS A TOUGH YEAR.

Across the world, people had to adapt to exponential change and upset. Despite all of this, the good can't be forgotten. During the early days of the shutdowns and stay-at-home orders, people who had never considered themselves bakers found themselves elbows-deep in dough, trying everything from cake to sourdough for the very first time. Then, on June 19, 2020, thousands of bakers—including myself and many of the *Bake from Scratch* team—banded together to host a global bake sale for Bakers Against Racism, an organization that encourages home bakers and professional pastry chefs to raise funds for local and national charities through bake sales. Each cookie, cake, and blondie sold has helped contribute to their current tally of $1.9 million, making this the most successful bake sale in history. To me, it has felt like the dawn of a new, sweeter era of baking.

This issue is devoted to carrying this era into the new year. We're celebrating Black bakers, an opportunity to pay tribute not only to the past contributions the Black community have made to the world of baking but to the current movers and shakers who are helping to build a more diverse future.

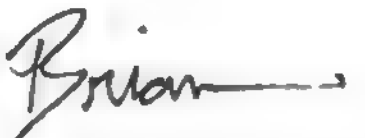
Our look back begins with one of my pantry favorites—the peanut. Without the diligent work of Dr. George Washington Carver, the peanut might not be nearly so beloved or easy to find. Bakers like me owe him the sweetest of gratitude. Speaking of peanuts, I have the pleasure to introduce you to our cover star, our Peanut Butter Cake. The man who inspired it, Al Roker, of course needs no introduction. Al's story (see Retro Redo, page 25) is a loving homage to Big Annie, the formidable woman and baker behind the original cake we had the honor of recreating. We also trace the history of benne wafers (page 107), which have always had a special place in the Gullah-Geechee communities of South Carolina. Accompanying the article is a recipe from Toni Tipton-Martin's fantastic cookbook *Jubilee*, as much of a history on African American cuisine as it is a tome for recipes.

Then, we look to the future. We're highlighting an all-star roundup of products from Black-owned businesses, as well as spotlighting three bakers who were a part of transforming Bakers Against Racism into a global movement, from the legendary Cheryl Day to the young and inspired Arley Arrington. We talk to Jocelyn Delk Adams of the blog *Grandbaby Cakes*, the woman introducing the next generation of bakers to the heirloom recipes she inherited from her grandmother. In addition to preserving her heritage in frosting and batter, Jocelyn is creating new classics. The photos accompanying this letter are of me baking her incredible Zingy Lemon Roll Biscuits (page 33), a laminated and citrus-packed recipe that I'll be baking on repeat this winter. Finally, meet the Bakers, Makers, Movers & Shakers You Need to Know (page 95) who are raising the bar and their voices in the world of baking. Running the gamut from business owners to sugar artists, each innovator is expanding and enrichening our community.

And as I said before, 2020 was tough. So, we're also delivering some much-needed comfort baking. From a decadent feature on frangipane to a luxurious look at baking with peanuts, each recipe is a master class in cozy, good vibes. You can try your hand at the fantastically fried beignet (page 35) or learn how to bake your own ideal of the brownie (page 85). For bakers looking for some guidance on the art of substitutions and kitchen hacks, turn to Baking Possible (page 65), our in-depth manual that'll keep you baking even if you lack an ingredient or tool. And for those still searching for more baking intel, turn to our new column Talk to Trish (page 113). In each issue, baking and pastry editor Tricia Manzanero will be tackling your questions here, sharing test kitchen wisdom on everything from dough to finnicky ovens.

This is an issue rich in more than just recipes—it's rich in stories and voices. I started this magazine because I wanted to create a brand that celebrated the baking community. That means sharing not only amazing recipes but also the many voices that power it. Our January/February issue is a continuation of this mission. We hope our work will never be done. As long as you, dear baker, keep telling your stories, we'll continue to share them.

Happy baking,



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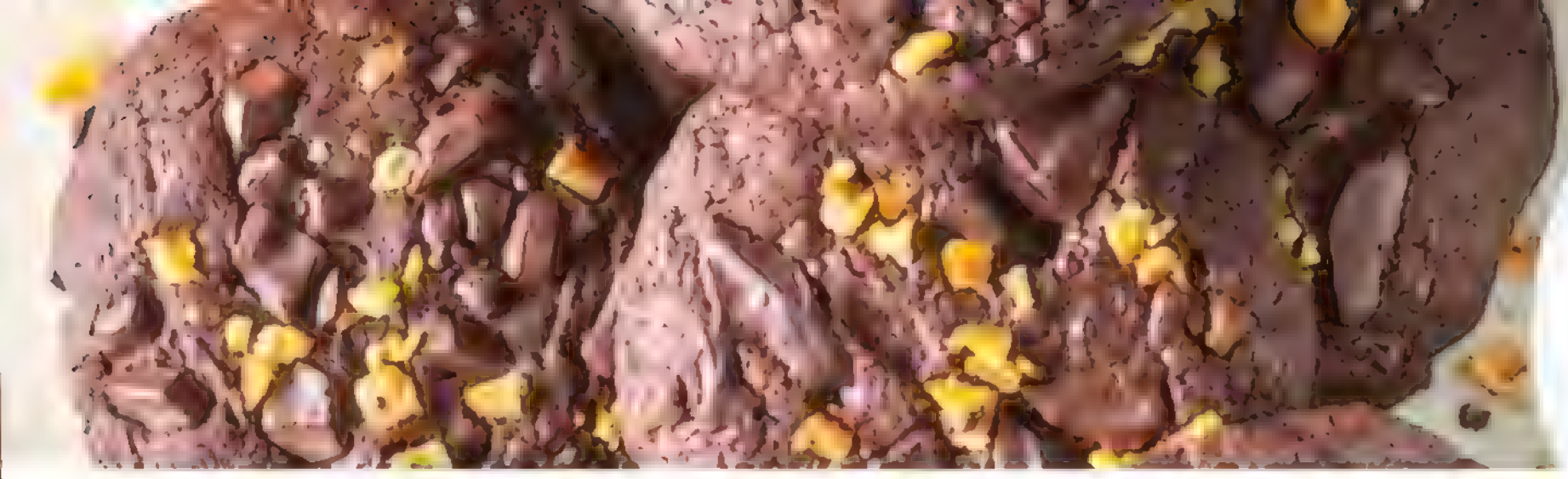

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AN EXCLUSIVE LOOK AT THIS YEAR'S SCHEDULE

January: No-Knead Dutch Oven Bread
February: Chocolate Pound Cake
March: Cheesecake
April: Conchas
May: Strawberry Roulade
June: Gluten-Free Coffee Cake
July: Focaccia
August: Three Ways with Oatmeal Cookies
September: English Muffins
October: Pumpkin Bagels
November: Pecan Hand Pies
December: Red Velvet Battenberg Cake

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Available at *jessissweettreats.com*, $11–$12

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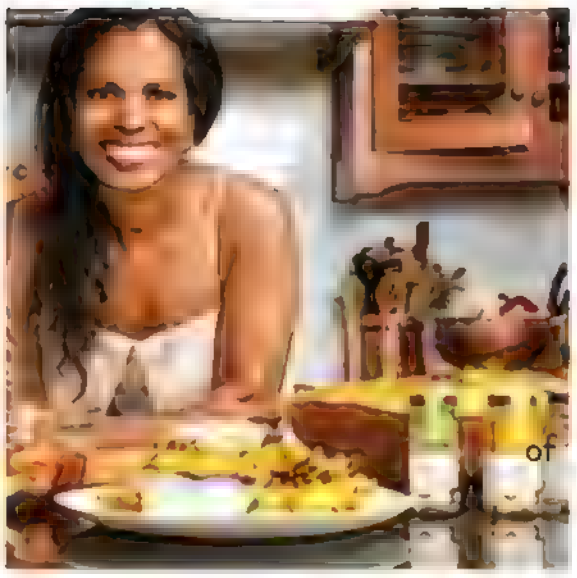


Samantha Binkley is turning up the volume on your next baked good with her thoughtful spice blends. A certified health coach, Sam created Healthy on You in 2015 to add the right balance of flavors to recipes. Choose the spice blend Provence You've Been Gone (a.k.a. herbes de Provence) to make your next savory bread recipe sing, or use the Spice Spice Baby (Asian 6 Spice) to crank up the volume of sweet and spicy notes for cinnamon rolls and cookies.

Available at *healthyonyou.com*, $12

WHISKY & SUNFLOWERS ENAMEL PINS

Joy McMillan is the baker and sourdough enthusiast who started Whisky & Sunflowers, a company that crafts charming, bread-obsessed miniature enamel pins. Whether you crave a crusty baguette or go wild for an everything bagel loaded with cream cheese, Joy has the perfect pin to display your love for carbs. Our editor-in-chief proudly shows off two of Joy's enamel creations on his apron in this issue's Letter from the Editor.

Available at *whiskyandsunflower.com*, $12

HOME IS WHERE THE APRON ART IS

Why did a cognitive behavioral therapist start a company devoted to the use of African prints? Well, just one look at Bespoke Binny and you will find uplifting colors and prints that are chosen to brighten lives and inspire well-being. With her Ghanaian heritage in mind, owner and creator Natalie Manima brings these aprons and oven mitts to life using her expertise in needlework.

Available at *bespokebinny.com*, $34

EYES ON THE KNIVES

Knies from Middleton Made Knives are the ultimate form of functional art. Selecting high carbon steel, Quintin Middleton and his apprentices take added care to craft each knife by hand. The artisanal quality make each one an art installation for your knife rack. We are obsessed with the paring knives, which are ideal for scoring designs in pastries like our Mini Galette des Rois.

Available at *middletonmadeknives.com*, $100

THE ARTISAN AND THE TEA

Whether you are having afternoon tea, high tea, or just looking for the perfect companion for your scone, the loose-leaf artisanal teas from Adjourn Teahouse are sure to fill you with warmth. We also love their Olive Wood Twist Spoons for measuring out tea or serving with treats. Each one is skillfully hand-carved from wild olive wood by Kamba wood carvers in Kenya. They are fair trade-certified, and with clean and thoughtful designs, no two spoons are alike.

Available at *adjournteahouse.com*, $16

HOME SWEET HONEY

At Zach & Zoë Sweet Bee Farm, a family of beekeepers is specializing in raw honey, which has a higher measurable value of vitamins, minerals, enzymes, and amino acids than its filtered and pasteurized counterpart. You can choose from wildflower honeys that are au naturel or those that have been infused with the most thoughtfully chosen ingredients, from ginger root to lavender. Trust us, you're not going to find anything artificial from this family.

Available at *zachandzoe.co*, $20 for 16 ounces

BAKERS AGAINST RACISM

LAST SUMMER, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF BAKERS JOINED FORCES FOR THE LARGEST BAKE SALE IN HISTORY. LAUNCHED BY BAKERS AGAINST RACISM, AN ORGANIZATION FOUNDED BY PAOLA VELEZ, WILLA PELINI, AND ROB RUBBA, THE BAKE SALES HAVE RAISED $1.9 MILLION TO DATE—AND COUNTING. WE'RE HIGHLIGHTING THREE OF THE BAKERS WHO HELPED TRANSFORM THE BAKE SALE FROM A FUNDRAISING EVENT TO A FULL-BLOWN MOVEMENT.

ARLEY ARRINGTON

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

How did you get involved with Bakers Against Racism?

AA: "When I first saw the Instagram post announcing Bakers Against Racism, I was immediately on board. I've been running an online bakery, Arley Cakes, for a while, and I've always brought my beliefs and activism to my baking. For the Richmond, Virginia, fundraiser, I baked little cookies with "Black Lives Matter" frosted on top. Since then, I've been auctioning cakes to the highest bidder and hosting other bake sales, donating the proceeds to a variety of causes, from a local fundraiser for school supplies to Spread the Vote, which boosts voter registration. Basically, since the first bake sale, I've strived to do one bake sale a month. Even if the donations are small, I love the opportunity to raise awareness for these causes."

We've all been spending more time at home recently. Have you challenged yourself with any difficult or more-involved bakes during the pandemic?

AA: "I'm still figuring out what I want Arley Cakes to look like, but I know what the long-term goal is. I want to build a business that can create good job opportunities for people who need it. I want to provide good work for disenfranchised people, offering benefits and health insurance in an industry that really needs it."

FOLLOW: *arleycakes.com*
INSTAGRAM: @arley.cakes

ROBERT TOLAND

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

How did you get involved with Bakers Against Racism?

RT: "The Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, chapter of Bakers Against Racism started with Camille Cogswell through Chef Paola Velez. Camille and Paola reached out to me shortly afterwards to get me involved. Being the Pastry Chef at Terrain for the past 5 years allowed me to have a larger platform to spread the word. Not only were we able to reach out to bakers in the Philadelphia area but we were also able to get chefs from our other locations involved as well. Camille also partnered with local brands like Weckerly's to get the word out. When we got back together to do the Bake the Vote bake sale, the mission was the same. Raise money and awareness while supporting those that are trying to make a difference in our society."

Where does your work go from here?

RT: "This was my first time getting involved in a bake sale that raised funds for charities. I've always donated my money, but never my time and work like this and it's been so incredibly gratifying. For future bake sales, we're just hoping to protect the vision that Paola, Willa, and Rob worked so hard to create with Bakers Against Racism. The climate becomes ripe for people to be more informed. Now, more than ever, people are ready to listen. It's up to us to be a voice of change."

INSTAGRAM: @thetoland
@phillybakersagainstracism

CHERYL DAY

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

How did you get involved with Bakers Against Racism?

CD: "Lisa Marie Donovan, Sarah O'Brien, and I had just started the Southern Restaurants for Racial Justice, an organization that works to do similar fundraising through an all-star group of Southern restaurants. Since bakers are the sweetest people on earth, I knew that we could pool our resources together to raise even more funds and awareness. We've been collaborating ever since. Lisa, Sarah, and I are all bakers, so it was a natural relationship that developed. For our organization, 100% of our profits go to Black-owned restaurants that are struggling. But we're always coordinating with BAR, doubling our impact. It's incredibly empowering that all of our voices are raised together."

What do you think has made Bakers Against Racism such a successful movement?

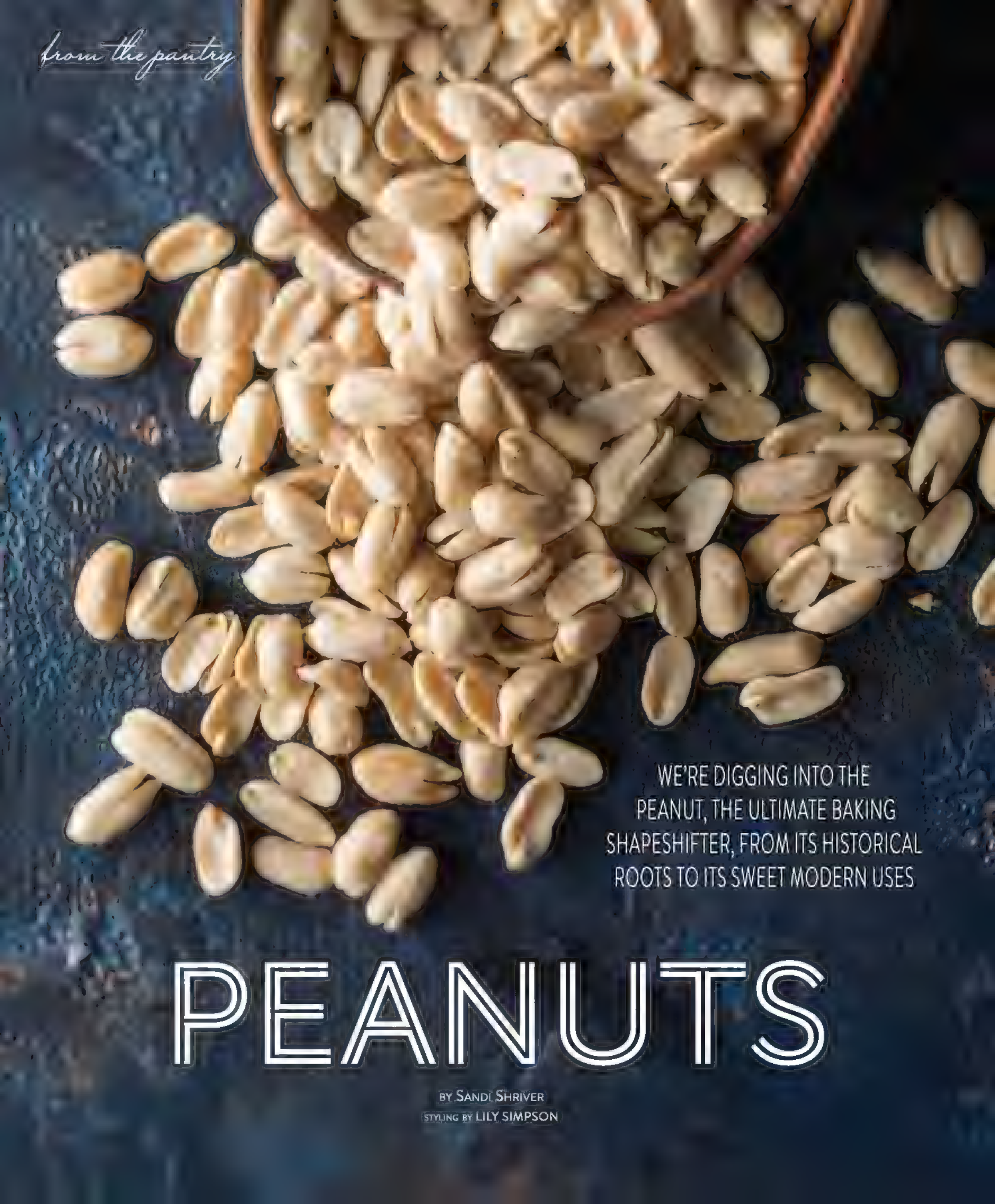
CD: "The reason I think this bake sale has been so successful is because Paola and the other founders opened the platform to both professional bakers and home bakers. It made all the difference. So many people were able to be part of this. When we hear about people in France and Germany who were able to participate, it's because everyone was welcome to join. Plus, Paola Velez is one of the most inspiring young women I know. As an elder watching this young woman come up in the same profession, it makes me so proud. She's been my woman of the year."

Where do you think it goes from here?

CD: "Bake sales go so far back in our history, since the Civil Rights movement and beyond. Bakers have always been the ones to get together to raise money for different organizations. This isn't a trend. Bakers know they can make a difference, and I don't see that going away anytime soon."

FOLLOW: *backinthedaybakery.com*
INSTAGRAM: @cherylday

GET INVOLVED! Go to *bakersagainstracism.com* to find out how you can help be part of an upcoming bake sale.



WE'RE DIGGING INTO THE PEANUT, THE ULTIMATE BAKING SHAPESHIFTER, FROM ITS HISTORICAL ROOTS TO ITS SWEET MODERN USES

PEANUTS

BY SANDI SHRIVER

STYLING BY LILY SIMPSON

It's hard to imagine that the world-famous peanut lives in a constant state of identity crisis. While it has the flavor characteristics of a nut, boasts the nutritional content of a seed, and develops underground like a tuber, the peanut actually belongs to the same plant family as beans and peas, called Leguminosae. As a legume, it is like no other in its class. Roasted, it releases aromatic oils and becomes undeniably crunchy; boiled, the peanut turns soft and creamy. It can be ground into peanut butter, pressed into cooking oil, and milled into flour. The peanut may forever struggle with the existential question, "Am I a pea, or am I a nut?" Whatever the answer, it remains the perfect baking companion in every way, shape, and form.

The peanut was first brought to North America aboard ships transporting enslaved Africans. It wasn't always a pantry essential; in fact, its popularity had a slow start. One man dedicated much of his life to changing this circumstance. Dr. George Washington Carver was born into slavery with a single name: George. As a free man, he would go on to take several more names during his remarkable life's journey, including the monikers the Plant Doctor, the Peanut Man, and the Peanut Wizard. Carver was the genius behind the Tuskegee Institute's science program. Now known as Tuskegee University, this university and others are known as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), prestigious institutions that educate and serve the Black community. As a master of agriculture and botany, Carver's infatuation with the peanut's nutritional use, ease of propagation, and soil nitrogen-fixing properties paved the way for the crop's prominence in the United States. As world wars heightened dependence on domestic food sources and boll weevils decimated cotton fields, the Peanut Wizard brought his knowledge to the table. Carver is credited with more than 300 uses for the peanut, from paints and lubricants to textiles and insulation, and 105 culinary uses, including oatmeal peanut bread (which he notes is delicious), panocha, and peanut brittle. The peanut's popularity took off, remaining a pantry staple to this day, and Carver is the brilliant man to thank for it.

For how common peanuts are today—from ball games and the circus to mid-flight snacks—they are usually recognized by differences in preparation, such as salted, roasted, and shelled. However, peanuts vary by type, and four market varieties dominate the US peanut industry—Runner, Virginia, Spanish, and Valencia—each exhibiting a distinct flavor and composition. The most common peanut, comprising approximately 85% of peanuts in the US, is the Runner, which is a particularly hardy crop with a high yield. Peanuts from Runner plants are medium-sized and uniform and have a very basic peanut flavor. Their low cost stretches their use to a variety of products, from peanut butters and oils to candies and snacks. Flavored with honey, packaged alongside other nuts, or dry-roasted, these peanuts appear readily on grocery store shelves and are the ultimate do-it-all option. Our Peanut-Jalapeño Cornbread (page 52) makes use of honey-roasted peanuts, adding a sweetness that balances the spicy jalapeño kick. Dry-roasted peanuts are the perfect choice for our Coffee-Peanut Meringue Cake (page 53), as the reduced oil content keeps the meringue airy and crisp.

The Virginia variety is the Cadillac of peanuts. It is prized for its larger size and superior quality. A "blister roast," or a hot dip in oil, boosts this peanut's crunch factor, and Virginias are best enjoyed on their own. However, they

can be used in any recipe calling for peanuts and add outstanding crunch and sweet flavor—if you don't mind spending a little extra.

The Spanish peanut is small, round, and extra-rich in oleic acid (a monounsaturated fatty acid shown to be beneficial to health), making it the select choice for extracting peanut oil. The higher oleic content also increases shelf life of the peanut, which means that the peanuts in your favorite candy bars stay fresher longer. The less readily available Valencia is dainty in size but packs a higher ratio of carbs, lending to its signature sweetness. Long pods with multiple beans are characteristic, so if you find a shell with four or five peanuts, you're likely holding a Valencia. This peanut is the preferred choice in all-natural peanut butters, where the inherent sweetness means no added sugars.

Speaking of peanut butter, let's talk about one of the most beloved peanut products. According to cereal and health food pioneer John Harvey Kellogg, the process of grinding peanuts into a paste creates "the most delicious nut butter you ever tasted in your life." A slurry of carbohydrates and proteins made creamy from the dispersion of unsaturated fats, peanut butter adds enticing flavor and silky texture to baked goods, becoming a perfect addition to cake batter and the star of buttercream. (See Peanut Butter Cake on page 27.) The choice between creamy and chunky may divide people, but treats made by team chunky benefit from added crunch. Chunky peanut butter swaps effortlessly for creamy in most recipes, but take care when piping frosting made with chunky peanut butter, as the peanut bits can quickly clog up pastry bags and piping tips.

Of course, the process of grinding peanuts doesn't stop at peanut butter. A rough grind and a thorough press extracts a golden oil that can be used to heighten baked goods. When the oil comes from roasted peanuts, the final product is fragrant and intensifies peanut flavor in recipes. The oil can also be refined, which gives it a neutral flavor and increases the smoke point. The high smoke point of peanut oil makes it the perfect medium for frying light and fluffy treats like doughnuts, beignets, and funnel cakes. For our The Essential . . . Beignets starting on page 35, we used canola oil for frying, but you could try peanut oil instead.

Once the oil is extracted from the peanut meal, defatted flour remains. Also called peanut butter powder, this seemingly new product is showing up on grocery store shelves. Don't let that fool you, though—peanut flour has been used in baked goods for decades, like the peanut biscuits described in the August 18, 1883, issue of *Scientific American*. Our Banana-Peanut Butter Biscuits recipe on page 48 pays homage to the classic peanut biscuit but uses the more modern and easy-to-find peanut butter powder. This powder doesn't add any additional oil, ensuring the texture of these biscuits stays ultralight. Peanut flour can be used in cookies, bars, cakes, and leavened breads for added flavor and texture, but because it doesn't contain gluten, it is not a direct swap.

The secret ingredient to many a beloved recipe, the peanut endures as one of the most versatile of pantry staples. Thanks to Carver's brilliance and fortitude, this national treasure is ours to enjoy.

BAKE WITH PEANUTS In this issue, don't miss:

Peanut Butter Cake, page **27**

Banana-Peanut Butter Biscuits, page **48**

Brown Sugar-Peanut Pie, page **50**

Peanut-Jalapeño Cornbread, page **52**

Coffee-Peanut Meringue Cake, page **53**

Peanut Butter-Chocolate Chunk Cakey Brownies, page **91**

BOURBON PEANUT BRITTLE

Makes about 4 cups

Golden, crunchy, and full of rich, buttery peanuts, peanut brittle recipes have been passed down for decades. The true enchantment of peanut brittle is explained by sugar science and a basic chemical reaction. The sugar mixture first undergoes caramelization, coming to a temperature that transforms it into candy. Next, the addition of baking soda causes the hot mixture to bubble up vigorously, and upon cooling, those tiny air pockets get trapped, creating the signature honeycomb texture. We have taken the classic peanut brittle recipe a step further with a generous splash of bourbon that gives it a first-class upgrade. See our PRO TIP for safety precautions when making hot sugar syrup.

- ¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
- ¼ cup (85 grams) light corn syrup
- ¼ cup (60 grams) bourbon
- ¾ cup (99 grams) dry-roasted lightly salted peanuts
- 1 tablespoon (14 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ¾ teaspoon (3 grams) vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda
- Flaked sea salt, for sprinkling

1. Line a rimmed baking sheet with a nonstick baking mat.

2. In a medium saucepan, stir together sugar, corn syrup, and bourbon; cook, without stirring, over medium heat until a candy thermometer registers 270°F (132°C). Stir in peanuts. Cook, stirring frequently, until a candy thermometer registers 300°F (149°C).

3. Remove sugar mixture from heat; working quickly, stir in butter, vanilla, and baking soda until butter is melted and mixture is well combined. (Adding the baking soda will cause the mixture to rapidly bubble.) Pour onto prepared pan; using a large offset spatula, quickly spread into a thin layer. Sprinkle with sea salt. Let cool completely.

4. Break brittle into shards, and store in an airtight container for up to 3 weeks.

PRO TIP

When making candy, the sticky nature of hot sugar syrup can lead to severe burns if precautions are not taken. It is important to use the utmost care around the hot syrup. Protect children and pets and wear protective clothing or pot holders when necessary. Furthermore, when making brittle, baking soda will cause the hot sugar to vigorously bubble, so it is important to use a pot that will be large enough to account for this expansion. As tempting as it may be, do not taste or touch the caramelized mixture while it is hot.

VANILLA BEAN SHEET CAKE WITH VANILLA BEAN SWISS MERINGUE BUTTERCREAM

A dreamy vanilla bean cake gets even dreamier with a generous Swiss meringue buttercream topping. Rich, aromatic Heilala Vanilla Bean Paste speckles the cake and the buttercream, driving home the sweet vanilla flavor.

Makes 1 (13x9-inch) cake

Recipe by Erin Clarkson

- 1⅓ cups plus 2 teaspoons (330 grams) whole milk
- ½ cup (120 grams) whole Greek yogurt
- 4 large eggs (200 grams), room temperature
- 2 large egg yolks (37 grams), room temperature
- 2 teaspoons (12 grams) Heilala Vanilla Bean Paste
- 4¾ cups plus 2 teaspoons (600 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2¼ cups (450 grams) granulated sugar
- 3¼ teaspoons (16.25 grams) baking powder
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- 1½ cups plus 1 teaspoon (345 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature
- Vanilla Bean Swiss Meringue Buttercream (recipe follows)
- Garnish: sprinkles

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Butter a 13x9-inch baking pan. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together milk, yogurt, eggs, egg yolks, and vanilla bean paste.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt at low speed just until combined. Add butter, one cube at a time, beating until combined after each addition. (Mixture should resemble sand.) Add half of milk mixture; beat at low speed just until combined. Add remaining milk mixture, and beat at medium speed just until combined. Using a rubber spatula, fold batter to ensure that no dry ingredients remain. Pour batter into prepared pan, smoothing top with an offset spatula.
4. Bake until cake springs back when touched in center and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 45 minutes. Let cool completely in pan.
5. Using excess parchment as handles, remove cooled cake from pan. Using an offset spatula, spread Vanilla Bean Swiss Meringue Buttercream onto cake, swirling as desired. Garnish with sprinkles, if desired.

Vanilla Bean Swiss Meringue Buttercream

About 6 cups

- 6 large egg whites (190 grams)
- 1½ cups (300 grams) granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- 3 cups plus 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon (700 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 2 teaspoons (12 grams) Heilala Vanilla Bean Paste

1. In the heatproof bowl of a stand mixer, combine egg whites, sugar, and salt. Place bowl over a saucepan of simmering water, and cook, whisking constantly, until sugar dissolves and an instant-read thermometer registers 160°F (70°C).
2. Carefully return bowl to stand mixer. Using the whisk attachment, beat at high speed until white and fluffy, 8 to 10 minutes.
3. Add butter to mixture, one cube at a time, beating until combined after each addition. (Mixture may look curdled, but just keep mixing.) Beat at high speed for 10 minutes.
4. Add vanilla bean paste to mixture, and beat at high speed for 2 to 3 minutes. Switch to the paddle attachment, and beat at low speed for 1 minute to remove any air.

Photography by Erin Clarkson

WHERE DOES THE WORLD'S MOST AWARDED VANILLA COME FROM?

What began as an aid project with my father to help a Tongan community recover from a devastating cyclone, is now a global, family-run vanilla business.

Vanilla is often described as the underwear of baking or the invisible essential. It's a complex ingredient with the ability to lift, elevate and add flavor and depth to a dish. In order to produce fragrant, aromatic vanilla beans with the optimum flavor profile, a warm tropical growing environment and lots of tender love and care is needed.

Turquoise waters, white sandy beaches and lush greenery are often phrases used to describe the Kingdom of Tonga. Our home in the South Pacific is a safe one, that is free from the corruption and adversity of farming in many vanilla growing regions. While producing award-winning vanilla is our specialty, helping communities in the Pacific is at the absolute core of our business.

Low-impact labor and a flexible and safe environment make vanilla farming an excellent form of employment for the women of Tonga. Chatting and laughing while they tend to the vanilla vines, we are truly proud to make vanilla an industry that supports families.

Heilala is a connected ecosystem, from farm to plate which ensures that we are invested in every part of the vanilla process. We are all about people and ensuring that we create the very best vanilla of consistent quality, for bakers and a reliable, steady industry for the farmers and communities that produce it.

While adding exceptional flavor and fragrance to your baking; know that every drop or spoonful of Heilala vanilla is giving back to the Tongan communities where our vanilla pods are hand-picked for ripeness.

Made with care, because you bake with care.

Jennifer Boggiss
CEO and Co-Founder
Heilala Vanilla

20% off Heilala on Amazon*

Use coupon code:

BFSJAN21

*Valid through March 30 2021

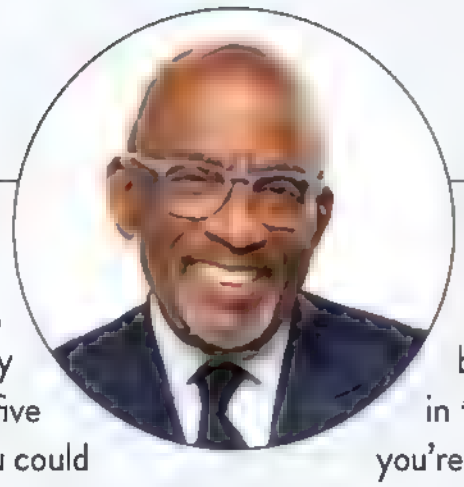
Each jar of Heilala Vanilla Bean Paste contains 12 vanilla pods and is loved by top chefs around the world

PEANUT BUTTER CAKE

THE *TODAY* ICON AND UNABASHED PEANUT BUTTER FROSTING LOVER AL ROKER SHARES THE ROMANTIC STORY OF BIG ANNIE'S PEANUT BUTTER CAKE

AS TOLD TO KYLE GRACE MILLS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHANIE WELBOURNE STEELE
STYLING BY MARY BETH JONES AND MELISSA STURDIVANT SMITH



My wife, Deborah, is from Perry, Georgia, and came from a very close-knit family. She had five aunts, and standing on her front porch, you could see four of the five aunts' homes. Big Annie was one of the aunts. She was 97 when I met her, living comfortably and independently by herself. As she greeted us, that classic Southern hospitality kicked in, and she took us to her porch freezer. She pulled out this brown cylinder, tightly wrapped in plastic. I thought, "This is interesting." We headed back to the parlor, talked for 45 minutes, and then Big Annie excused herself and returned saying, "I thought you might like to try my peanut butter cake." She served us cake wedges thick enough to choke a horse, but I have to say, it was fantastic. I'd never had anything like that in my life. I'd never even tasted peanut butter frosting before that day. Sadly, I got this one piece of it but never got the recipe. As was the case with my mother and grandmother, Big Annie didn't bake by recipe. She just knew what went into it, like baking muscle memory.

I have a similar longing for my father's baking and lost recipes. When I was in fourth or fifth grade, he just decided he wanted to experiment with cinnamon rolls. We lived in Brooklyn, New York, in an apartment building on the first floor, and I remember the dense thud I heard when he dumped the failed dough into the incinerator. He finally got it right. To this day, my greatest olfactory memory is coming into the apartment on a cold winter day and being greeted by the smell of cinnamon rolls baking. By the time I went off to college, he had stopped baking, and I never got a chance to ask him why or what his recipe for the cinnamon rolls was.

We tried to reverse engineer the peanut butter cake for *TODAY*, and it held up. Back in the day, baking was all economy of scale. If you're baking one cake, you might as well bake two, and if you can bake two, bake three and we'll freeze two. I have no idea how long Big Annie's peanut butter cake had been waiting for me in the freezer. The one we made for *TODAY* was a bit fresher, and came very close to the cake I remembered. Either way, you can't do much better than something baked with peanut butter, that sweet, frugal pantry favorite.

I'm not much of a baker myself, because, well, I liken it to music. Cooking is jazz and baking is classical music. You can't veer off the track and improvise with baking. There can be happy accidents, though. During quarantine, Deborah made a banana bread that should have been a disaster. The center didn't set and the top didn't rise enough—but what happened was that it made this kind of banana jam in the middle. I loved it. Now, we can't duplicate it. She baked it again, and this time, the recipe worked correctly but I missed that jammy center. Another delicious baked good I guess we can't replicate. Still, it'll live on in my memory, just like Big Annie's decadent peanut butter cake.

PEANUT BUTTER CAKE

Makes 1 (9-inch) cake

Inspired by Big Annie's original cake that made such a lasting impression on Al Roker, this Peanut Butter Cake doubles down on nutty decadence. A caramel-rich Peanut Praline Filling packs the center while candied peanuts form a chewy golden crown on top. To finish it off, we encased the entire peanut-powered masterpiece in a velvet Peanut Butter Frosting that would do Al proud.

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (255 grams) unsalted butter, softened
2¼ cups (450 grams) granulated sugar
1 cup (256 grams) creamy peanut butter*
1 tablespoon (13 grams) vanilla extract
3 large eggs (150 grams), room temperature
3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon (15 grams) baking powder
¾ teaspoon (3.75 grams) baking soda
¾ teaspoon (4.5 grams) salt
2¼ cups (540 grams) whole milk, room temperature
Peanut Butter Frosting (recipe follows)
Peanut Praline Filling (recipe follows)
Garnish: Brown Sugar Candied Peanuts (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray 3 (9-inch) round cake pans with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pans with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, about 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on medium-low speed, add peanut butter and vanilla, beating until smooth and well combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until smooth and well combined after each addition.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition and stopping frequently to scrape bottom and sides of bowl. Divide batter among prepared pans (about 663 grams each), and smooth tops using a small offset spatula. Tap pans on a kitchen towel-lined counter several times to settle batter and release any air bubbles.
4. Bake until cakes spring back lightly when gently pressed in center and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 25 to 30 minutes, rotating pans during last 2 to 4 minutes of baking. Let cool in pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely, parchment side down, on wire racks. Once cool, remove parchment paper.
5. Trim or level cooled cake layers, if desired. Place 1 cake layer on a serving plate. Spoon ½ cup (120 grams) Peanut Butter Frosting into a pastry bag; cut a ½-inch opening in tip. Pipe a ½-inch-tall border around edge of cake layer. Dollop half of Peanut Praline Filling (about 375 grams) all over top of cake layer, and spread until even and reaches piped border. Top with second cake layer. Pipe a ½-inch-tall border around edge of cake layer. Dollop remaining Peanut Praline Filling all over top of cake layer, and spread until even and reaches piped border. Top with remaining cake layer. Spread a thin layer of frosting on top and sides of cake to create a crumb coat. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
6. Spread remaining Peanut Butter Frosting on top and sides of cake. Garnish with Brown Sugar Candied Peanuts, if desired. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or up to overnight. Let stand at room temperature for 20 to 30 minutes before serving.

**We used Jif Creamy Peanut Butter.*

Peanut Butter Frosting

Makes 7 cups

3 cups (768 grams) creamy peanut butter
1½ cups (340 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature*

Pinch salt
4½ cups (540 grams) confectioners' sugar
2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
6 tablespoons (90 grams) whole milk, room temperature

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat peanut butter, butter, and salt at medium speed until smooth and well combined, 1 to 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until combined. Beat in vanilla. Gradually add milk, and beat at medium-low speed until smooth and spreadable, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.

**Unlike softened butter, room temperature butter should provide no resistance when pressed with a finger.*

Peanut Praline Filling

Makes about 2½ cups

⅔ cup (147 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar
⅔ cup (226 grams) light corn syrup
¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar
2 large eggs (100 grams)
1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract
½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
⅛ teaspoon salt
1½ cups (213 grams) chopped dry-roasted peanuts
⅓ cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, cubed

1. In a medium saucepan, whisk together brown sugar, corn syrup, granulated sugar, eggs, vanilla, cinnamon, and salt until well combined. Stir in peanuts and butter. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring frequently. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer, stirring frequently, until thickened, 6 to 8 minutes. Let cool to room temperature before using.

Brown Sugar Candied Peanuts

Makes about 2 cups

½ cup (110 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar
3 tablespoons (45 grams) water
1 tablespoon (21 grams) light corn syrup
½ teaspoon (3 grams) salt
½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
1 cup (142 grams) dry-roasted peanuts

1. Line a rimmed baking sheet with nonstick parchment paper or a nonstick baking mat.
2. In a tall-sided 9½- to 10-inch skillet, stir together brown sugar, 3 tablespoons (45 grams) water, corn syrup, salt, and cinnamon until well combined. Bring to a boil, without stirring, over medium heat. Stir in peanuts until well coated. Cook, stirring frequently and moving skillet on and off heat as needed, until mixture is thickened and clings to peanuts and a candy thermometer registers 300°F (149°C).
3. Working quickly, carefully spoon mixture onto prepared pan, separating peanuts as much as possible. Let cool completely. Break into pieces, and store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

Al baking in his kitchen

THE SWEETEST HERITAGE

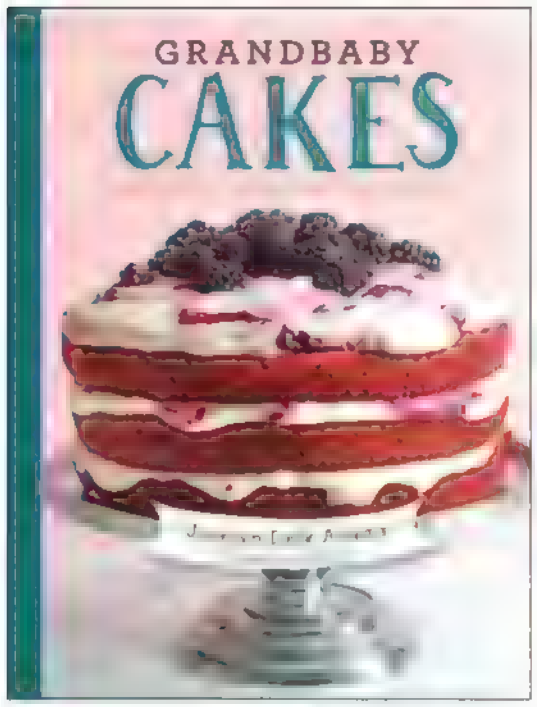
WE TALK WITH JOCELYN DELK ADAMS, THE BOSS BAKER BEHIND *GRANDBABY CAKES*, ON THE ART OF PRESERVING MEMORIES AND FAMILY TRADITION THROUGH BAKING

Some people inherit handmade quilts orfine china from their grandmother; Jocelyn Delk Adams inherited a passion. The baker and creator of the blog *Grandbaby Cakes* has built an empire on heirloom recipes twirled up with modern flavors. Jocelyn knows that everything that has come since *Grandbaby Cakes*'s inception—the television spots on *TODAY* and the Food Network, the award-winning cookbook, the brand partnerships—all started with her baking in the kitchen with her grandmother Maggie Mae Small. "In every sense of the word, my grandmother is my muse," Jocelyn says.

Growing up in the hustle and bustle of the outskirts of Chicago, Illinois, Jocelyn and her family spent summer vacations and holidays visiting her grandfather and Big Mama, as Maggie was affectionately known, in Winona, Mississippi. "It was always such an interesting change of pace. It's a small, quaint town, and there wasn't much for us to do except bake." And bake, she did. With Big Mama as her guide, Jocelyn was inducted into the magical world of batter and dough, learning to frost coconut cakes, bake sweet potato pies, and whip up biscuits. "Every morning, without fail, she made her biscuits for breakfast. For more special occasions, she made her dinner rolls, and this would always accompany her classic Southern cooking, like smothered pork chops and fried catfish—the food you're always most comforted by."

Big Mama wasn't the only member of Jocelyn's family who proved to be a formative influence in the culinary department. Her mother and aunt both have had plenty to do with Jocelyn's comfort in the kitchen. "My mother definitely can bake and cook, but she's more into the decoration and shopping side of things. We like to joke that the love-of-baking gene skipped her and came to me," she says with a laugh. Jocelyn didn't think of this baking gene as the key to her career at first. "I was a media major in college and worked behind the scenes in the television industry," she says. But baking kept manifesting as more than just a pastime or hobby. "I was always bringing in cakes to the office, all of them based off of my grandmother's recipes. It got to the point where I earned the nickname Baby Cakes." Then came the watershed moment. In 2012, Jocelyn purchased a rudimentary website template for $99 and launched *Grandbaby Cakes* as a way to share her grandmother's recipes. But what started as an impulse decision transformed into a cohesive vision. "I wanted it to really feel nostalgic. At the same time, I wanted it to represent both the old and new, honoring my past and honoring my current passion," she says.

Two years of dedicated hustling later, Jocelyn was approached by not one, but two literary agents with interest in a *Grandbaby Cakes* cookbook. Like with the blog, she had a clear goal in mind for what the cookbook would be. "I wanted to write a cookbook that could be passed down to another generation the same way these things were passed down to me. That's why I put a little note in the beginning of the cookbook, asking readers to write down who in the family was the first generation who used the cookbook," she says. Packed within its glossy pages of Bundt cakes and cream cheese frosting were the recipes that first got Jocelyn baking as a child, from her mom's 7UP Pound Cake to her grandmother's Fig Brown Sugar Cake. The tome also offered plenty of Jocelyn's creative new ideas, crossing hummingbird cake with pineapple upside-down cake and incorporating blackberry buttercream with iconic red velvet layer cake. The book's tagline, "Modern Recipes, Vintage Charm," sums up why the cookbook became an instant classic. It would go on to win a Gourmand World Cookbook Award, but this honor paled in comparison to the shining moment Jocelyn was able to share with her grandmother after it was published. "I remember the moment I first handed my cookbook to my grandmother. She said, 'This is the most beautiful thing I've ever seen.' And I still have that precious memory of her holding my cookbook, this great recognition of who she was to me."



Since the cookbook, Jocelyn has continued to nurture and grow the blog, striving to preserve the connection that her followers feel for her and her recipes. "What means the most to me is that millions of people can visit my website but the whole exchange stays so intimate. I'm sharing recipes, but those recipes become a little girl's birthday cake or a family's Thanksgiving dessert. I'm getting to be a part of people's lives in a special and real way." And while other bloggers may feel the need to change things up and head in a new direction, Jocelyn plans to stay true to what makes her blog work. "I know there's some current pushback with people just wanting to get to the recipe and not engage in the story, but these recipes are important to me. They have stories behind them, family behind them. And I don't think people have connected with *Grandbaby Cakes* just because of the recipes—they feel as connected to me as they do to the recipes."

Even with the full-time job as a baking guru, Jocelyn has spent plenty of her time and energy paying it forward. In 2014, she created A Charitable Confection, a fundraiser that brought together some of Chicago's top bakeries and pastry chefs to host a bake sale benefiting Project Orange Tree, a foundation focused on educating youth about societal and structural violence in the community. Then, in 2017, she contributed to the cookbook *Feed the Resistance*, a community potluck of recipes that urged bakers and chefs to delve into activism and good food. Perhaps one of her proudest endeavors was working as an instructor at a Chicago Youth Center. "I was able to teach baking courses for six months, helping kids learn the kitchen basics, but really, life skills. I think my favorite part was that I had two boys sign up, and I loved getting them into the kitchen. It felt like I had the chance to show the kitchen is a domain for everyone."

Jocelyn believes that there are few places more perfect for a person to nurture their individuality than the kitchen. "The kitchen is such an empowering place. I'm a Black woman with a very successful business—and the kitchen is where I built it."

ZINGY LEMON ROLL BISCUITS WITH LEMON-CREAM CHEESE DRIZZLE

Makes 12 biscuits

These laminated, citrus- and ginger-packed biscuits offer warm, buttery comfort for cold winter days.

Biscuits:

- 3¾ cups (469 grams) all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup (32 grams) cornstarch
- ½ cup (100 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar, divided
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) baking powder
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground ginger
- 2 tablespoons (6 grams) plus 2 teaspoons (2 grams) lemon zest (about 3 large lemons), divided
- 1 cup plus 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon (246 grams) cold unsalted butter*, divided
- 1½ cups (360 grams) cold whole milk
- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) salted butter*, softened

Glaze:

- 4 ounces (113 grams) cream cheese, softened
- Pinch salt
- 1½ cups (180 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 1½ teaspoons (1.5 grams) lemon zest (about 1 lemon)
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) fresh lemon juice

1. For biscuits: In a large bowl, sift together flour, cornstarch, 2 tablespoons (24 grams) sugar, baking powder, salt, and ginger. Add 2 teaspoons (2 grams) lemon zest, and toss with your hands. Make a well in center. Shred ¾ cup (170 grams) cold butter into well. Using your hands, toss together flour mixture and shredded butter. Add cold milk, and knead by hand in bowl just until a thick dough forms.

2. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface. Fold dough over itself four times to develop a stiff dough. Roll dough into a 12x8-inch rectangle. Shred remaining ⅓ cup (76 grams) cold butter onto two-thirds widthwise of rectangle. Fold unbuttered third of dough over center third; fold remaining third over middle fold. (You should have a rectangle with no buttered parts exposed.) Roll dough into a 12x8-inch rectangle. Fold each short ends to meet in center; fold in half where short ends meet. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 20 minutes.

3. Roll dough into a 12x8-inch rectangle. Fold short ends to meet in center; fold in half where short ends meet. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

4. In a small bowl, stir together remaining ½ cup (100 grams) sugar and remaining 2 tablespoons (6 grams) lemon zest; set aside.

5. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray a 12-cup muffin pan with baking spray with flour.

6. Roll dough into an 18x14-inch rectangle. Using an offset spatula, spread softened butter onto dough, leaving a 1-inch border on one long side. Sprinkle lemon zest-sugar mixture onto butter. Starting with long side opposite border, roll dough into a log, jelly roll style; pinch seam to seal. Place dough seam side down, and cut into 12 slices. Press slices into prepared muffin cups. (Pressing down lightly on inner part will help them form a swirl when they're baked.)

7. Bake until golden brown and puffed up, 55 minutes to 1 hour. Let cool in pan for 5 minutes. Immediately invert biscuits onto a wire rack, and let biscuits cool completely upside down.

8. For glaze: In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and salt with a mixer at low speed until smooth. Gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until combined; scrape sides of bowl and beaters. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until light and fluffy. Add lemon zest and juice, and beat at low speed until well combined. Drizzle glaze onto cooled biscuits. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

**I used Land O Lakes® Butter.*

Notes: *To reheat, microwave on high for 15 seconds, or reheat in a 200°F (93°C) oven for 5 minutes.*

MAKE AHEAD

Dough can be made through step 3 up to 1 day ahead. Glaze can be made up to 3 days ahead.

PRO TIP

For extra lemony flavor, brush a thin layer of fresh lemon juice on top of biscuits after removing them from the pan.

MAMA'S 7UP POUND CAKE

Serves 12–16

This is a vintage recipe that has been in my family for decades. It was actually the very first cake I ever learned to bake, which I suspect is not only because it is my mother's absolute favorite cake but also because it was an unintimidating induction into the baking world, with results that even a nine-year-old girl could master. When I bake it now, I always imagine passing this recipe down to my daughter to bake for her family one day.

P.S. My mother has always been adamant about using the original 7UP and nothing else. She says you can really taste the difference. While I have used other lemon-lime soda brands ranging from Sprite to Sierra Mist, I try my best to follow my mother's advice.

CAKE

- 1½ cups (340 grams) (3 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 3 cups (600 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon (6 grams) salt
- 5 large eggs (250 grams), room temperature
- 3 cups (375 grams) sifted cake flour
- ½ cup (120 grams) 7UP soda, room temperature
- 1 tablespoon (13 grams) lemon extract

GLAZE

- 1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) 7UP soda
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) lemon extract

FOR THE CAKE

1. Preheat your oven to 315°F (160°C). Prepare a 10-cup Bundt pan with the nonstick method of your choice.
2. In the bowl of your stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat the butter for 2 minutes on high speed. Slowly add the sugar and salt. Cream together for an additional 7 minutes, until very pale yellow and fluffy. Add the eggs 1 at a time, combining well after each addition and scraping down the sides and bottom of the bowl as needed.
3. Turn your mixer down to its lowest speed and slowly add the flour in 2 batches. Be careful not to overbeat. Pour in the 7UP and lemon extract. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl and mix the batter until just combined. Be careful not to overmix.
4. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 75 to 85 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean.
5. Let the cake cool in the pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes, then invert onto a serving plate. Let cool to room temperature. Lightly cover the cake with foil or plastic wrap so it does not dry out.

FOR THE GLAZE

1. In a small bowl, whisk together all the ingredients until the mixture is pourable. When the cake is completely cool, spoon the glaze over the cake and allow it to harden. Serve at room temperature.

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the essential...

BEIGNETS

LEARN HOW TO MAKE THE NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA, FRIED ICON, FROM A CONFECTIONERS' SUGAR-DUSTED CLASSIC TO A PRALINE CREAM-FILLED TWIST

PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLIAM DICKEY / RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY LAURA CRANDALL
FOOD STYLING BY MEGAN LANKFORD / STYLING BY COURTNI BODIFORD / HAND MODELING BY JANEKA MAZE

Bite into a freshly fried, pillowy beignet, and there's a burst of air, confectioners' sugar puffing out as the interior hollow collapses in. Beyond offering a decadent taste of pastry, the beignet sends one on a sensational journey to the fantastic city it hails from, calling to mind the aroma of hot chicory coffee, the convivial sound of jazz, and of ancient oak trees glimmering with strands of green, gold, and purple beads. Brought to Louisiana in the 18th century by the Acadian settlers from the French colonies in Canada, beignets have become an emblematic star of New Orleans' Cajun-style pâtisserie. In the historic French Quarter, the most iconic of beignets is served at Café du Monde. Established in 1862 as a humble coffee stand, Café du Monde serves only one pastry item, beignets, preferably with a cup of the Creole standard of café au lait, a dark-roasted chicory coffee cut with hot milk.

While there's much unique magic to be found in New Orleans, the particular glory of the beignet can be brought to your home kitchen. We'll take you from shaping to frying, helping you master the basics in between. With three foolproof recipes, from classic to perfectly praline, you'll soon be bringing a bit of Crescent City charm to your corner of the world.

TRADITIONAL BEIGNETS

Makes 24 beignets

Our recipe offers the crisp, golden standard of a beignet, perfect with only an adornment of confectioners' sugar. Our dough can be made and chilled overnight before a morning fry in oil for a breakfast of beignets the way they're intended to be served—still hot with an equally hot cup of café au lait.

½ cup (120 grams) warm water (105°F/41°C to 110°F/43°C)
1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) active dry yeast
¼ cup (50 grams) plus 1 teaspoon (4 grams) granulated sugar, divided
½ cup (120 grams) boiling water
½ cup (120 grams) evaporated milk
2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, melted
2 teaspoons (6 grams) kosher salt
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
1 large egg (50 grams)
4¼ cups (531 grams) all-purpose flour
Canola or vegetable oil, for frying
1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar

1. In a small bowl, stir together ½ cup (120 grams) warm water, yeast, and 1 teaspoon (4 grams) granulated sugar. Let stand until foamy, about 5 minutes.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together ½ cup (120 grams) boiling water, evaporated milk, melted butter, salt, vanilla, and remaining ¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar by hand. Whisk in yeast mixture and egg. Add flour. Using the dough hook attachment, beat until dough comes together, starts to get smooth and soft, and forms a ball at base of dough hook, 6 to 7 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. (Dough should stick to your fingers when you touch it but release after you pull away. Dough will still stick to bottom and sides of bowl.) Check dough for proper gluten development using the windowpane test. (See Beignet Dough Basics.)
3. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or up to overnight.
4. In a large Dutch oven, pour oil to a depth of 2 inches, and heat over medium heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 375°F (190°C). (See Note.)
5. Divide dough in half (about 518 grams each). On a heavily floured surface, roll half of dough into a 13x10-inch rectangle (about ¼ inch thick). (Cover and refrigerate remaining dough.) Trim ½ inch off edges so rectangle is 12x9 inches. Cut into 3-inch squares, and separate them so they do not stick back together.
6. Place 2 to 3 squares in hot oil; when settled on top of oil, immediately turn. (See Frying 411 on page 40.) Fry until golden brown, about 1 minute per side. Carefully remove from hot oil, and let drain on paper towels. Repeat procedure with remaining dough. Sift confectioners' sugar over hot beignets. Serve warm.

Note: *It can take 30 to 45 minutes for the oil to heat. Remove the dough from the refrigerator only after the oil reaches 375°F (190°C).*

Beignet Dough Basics

Learn how to master the quirks of the dough

Beignet dough is a fairly wet, sticky dough. While there is yeast in a typical beignet dough, a great amount of its puffy rise during frying is due to the excess moisture in the dough. This moisture becomes a powerful burst of steam, allowing the dough to puff out while a large hollow is created within. While this texture makes it perfect to fry into puffed pastries, it can be difficult to know when your dough has been kneaded properly. The best way to gauge when your dough is ready is to use the windowpane test to check dough for proper gluten development. Pinch off (don't tear) a small piece of dough. Slowly pull the dough out from the center. If the dough is ready, you will be able to stretch it until it's thin and translucent like a windowpane. If the dough tears, it's not quite ready. Beat for 1 minute, and test again.

Two Ways to Cut

Round or square, a beignet is beautiful in any shape. Learn how to shape them both ways.

FOR SQUARES

1. TRIMMING DOUGH

First, you'll need to trim the dough so you can cut out clean squares. On a heavily floured surface, roll dough into a 13x10-inch rectangle (about ¼ inch thick). Trim ½ inch off edges so rectangle is 12x9 inches. The dough will be sticky, so keep plenty of flour on hand to generously coat your surface, rolling pin, and cutting utensils. Keep your trusty ruler on hand so you can cut exactly to the designated measurement.

2. CUTTING SQUARE DOUGH

Cut into 3-inch squares, and separate them so they do not stick back together. We used a pastry wheel for cutting, as it moves quickly and efficiently through the sticky dough, but a sharp knife will work as well. It's important to separate the dough squares, as the tacky dough tends to meld back together when touching.

FOR ROUNDS

CUTTING ROUND DOUGH

Using a 3¼-inch round cutter, cut circles, and separate them so they do not stick back together; discard scraps. For the round cutter, a biscuit cutter or cookie cutter will do the trick, although even the rim of a straight-sided drinking glass will work. Again, as you cut, separate the circles so the dough doesn't merge back together.

Frying 411

Have no fear of frying! Follow these steps to fry epically golden, delightfully crisp beignets.

1. PREP

Before you cut your beignets into squares or circles, go ahead and prep your oil. In a large Dutch oven, pour oil to a depth of 2 inches, and heat over medium heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 375°F (190°C). This can take 30 to 45 minutes, and patience is key. If you try to fry the beignets before the oil reaches the right temperature, your beignets will be pale and greasy, absorbing oil instead of cooking in a hot flash. While we used an enamel-coated Dutch oven, a large, heavy-bottomed stockpot can work as well—just make sure that it has a thick base so it can heat the oil evenly.

2. FRYING

If you're new to frying, start off with one beignet. Once you carefully drop the beignet into the oil, it'll float and settle on top of the oil. Just as it settles on top, immediately turn it over with your slotted spoon or spider strainer. This makes for more even frying; otherwise, a pale circle appears on one side of the beignet. Fry until golden brown, about 1 minute per side. As you become more comfortable, you can fry two or three at a time, but don't do more than that—it will drop the temperature of the oil. As you continue to fry, pay attention to your thermometer, adjusting the heat as needed to maintain a temperature of 375°F (190°C).

3. COOLING

Have a paper towel-lined dish waiting for the fried beignets to cool on. The paper towels will absorb excess oil. After you've finished frying, you'll either let them cool enough for filling (see our Praline Cream-Filled Beignets on page 43), or you'll let them cool just enough for them to be safely coated in cinnamon sugar or to be served with a dusting of confectioners' sugar.

CINNAMON-SUGAR BEIGNETS

Makes 24 beignets

We've introduced the spiced-sugar coating often used on a churro to the beignet formula. These freshly fried beignets get tossed in a cinnamon-sugar blend, adding a satisfying note of crunch to the mix.

½ cup (120 grams) warm water (105°F/41°C to 110°F/43°C)
1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) active dry yeast
1¼ cups (250 grams) plus 1 teaspoon (4 grams) granulated sugar, divided
½ cup (120 grams) boiling water
½ cup (120 grams) evaporated milk
2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, melted
2 teaspoons (6 grams) kosher salt
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
1 large egg (50 grams)
4¼ cups (531 grams) all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons (12 grams) ground cinnamon, divided
Canola or vegetable oil, for frying

1. In a small bowl, stir together ½ cup (120 grams) warm water, yeast, and 1 teaspoon (4 grams) sugar. Let stand until foamy, about 5 minutes.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together ½ cup (120 grams) boiling water, evaporated milk, ¼ cup (50 grams) sugar, melted butter, salt, and vanilla by hand. Whisk in yeast mixture and egg.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour and 1 tablespoon (6 grams) cinnamon; add to boiling water mixture. Using the dough hook attachment, beat until dough comes together, starts to get smooth and soft, and forms a ball at base of dough hook, 6 to 7 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. (Dough should stick to your fingers when you touch it but release after you pull away. Dough will still stick to bottom and sides of bowl.) Check dough for proper gluten development using the windowpane test. (See Beignet Dough Basics on page 38).
4. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or up to overnight.
5. In a large Dutch oven, pour oil to a depth of 2 inches, and heat over medium heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 375°F (190°C). (See Note.)
6. In another medium bowl, stir together remaining 1 cup (200 grams) sugar and remaining 1 tablespoon (6 grams) cinnamon.
7. Divide dough in half (about 518 grams each). On a heavily floured surface, roll half of dough into a 13x10-inch rectangle (about ¼ inch thick). (Cover and refrigerate remaining dough.) Trim ½ inch off edges so rectangle is 12x9 inches. Cut into 3-inch squares, and separate them so they do not stick back together.
8. Place 2 to 3 squares in hot oil; when settled on top of oil, immediately turn. (See Frying 411 on page 40.) Fry until golden brown, about 1 minute per side. Carefully remove from hot oil, and let drain on paper towels; immediately toss in cinnamon sugar. Place on wire rack. Repeat procedure with remaining dough. Serve warm.

Note: *It can take 30 to 45 minutes for the oil to heat. Remove the dough from the refrigerator only after the oil reaches 375°F (190°C).*

PRALINE CREAM-FILLED BEIGNETS

Makes 16 beignets

Two New Orleans classics combine for these gorgeous praline cream-packed beignets. In addition to the caramel-rich filling, we dipped these pastries in Vanilla Glaze and further crowned them with Candied Pecans, driving home that iconic praline flavor.

- ½ cup (120 grams) warm water (105°F/41°C to 110°F/43°C)
- 1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) active dry yeast
- ¼ cup (50 grams) plus 1 teaspoon (4 grams) granulated sugar, divided
- ½ cup (120 grams) boiling water
- ½ cup (120 grams) evaporated milk
- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, melted
- 2 teaspoons (6 grams) kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- 4¼ cups (531 grams) all-purpose flour
- Canola or vegetable oil, for frying
- Praline Cream Filling (recipe follows)
- Vanilla Glaze (recipe follows)
- Candied Pecans (recipe follows), finely chopped

1. In a small bowl, stir together ½ cup (120 grams) warm water, yeast, and 1 teaspoon (4 grams) sugar. Let stand until foamy, about 5 minutes.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk together ½ cup (120 grams) boiling water, evaporated milk, melted butter, salt, vanilla, and remaining ¼ cup (50 grams) sugar by hand. Whisk in yeast mixture and egg. Add flour. Using the dough hook attachment, beat until dough comes together, starts to get smooth and soft, and forms a ball at base of dough hook, 6 to 7 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. (Dough should stick to your fingers when you touch it but release after you pull away. Dough will still stick to bottom and sides of bowl.) Check dough for proper gluten development using the windowpane test. (See Beignet Dough Basics on page 38).

3. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or up to overnight.

4. In a large Dutch oven, pour oil to a depth of 2 inches, and heat over medium heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 350°F (180°C). (See Note.)

5. Divide dough in half (about 518 grams

each). On a heavily floured surface, roll half of dough into a 13x10-inch rectangle (about ¼ inch thick). (Cover and refrigerate remaining dough.) Using a 3¼-inch round cutter, cut 8 circles, and separate them so they do not stick back together; discard scraps.
6. Place 2 to 3 circles in hot oil; when settled on top of oil, immediately turn. (See Frying 411 on page 40.) Fry until golden brown, 1 to 2 minutes per side. Carefully remove from hot oil, and let drain on paper towels. Let cool completely. Repeat procedure with remaining dough.
7. Using a small paring knife, make a hole in side of each cooled beignet; using a small wooden skewer, hollow inside of each beignet.
8. Place Praline Cream Filling in a pastry bag fitted with a ¼-inch round piping tip; pipe filling into beignets. Dip tops in Vanilla Glaze, letting excess drip off; sprinkle with Candied Pecans. Serve immediately.

Note: *It can take 30 to 45 minutes for the oil to heat. Remove the dough from the refrigerator only after the oil reaches 350°F (180°C).*

Praline Cream Filling
Makes about 4 cups

- **12 ounces (340 grams) cream cheese, softened**
- **¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- **¼ cup (75 grams) Caramel Sauce (recipe follows)**
- **1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract**
- **1⅓ cups (160 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- **1½ tablespoons (22.5 grams) heavy whipping cream**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cream cheese and butter at medium-low speed until smooth and creamy, about 1 minute. Beat in Caramel Sauce and vanilla. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until combined. Add cream, and beat at medium speed until smooth and fluffy, about 1 minute.

Caramel Sauce
Makes 1⅓ cups

- **1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar**
- **4 tablespoons (60 grams) water, divided**
- **½ cup (120 grams) heavy whipping cream, room temperature**
- **6 tablespoons (84 grams) unsalted butter, softened and cubed**
- **2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**

1. In a medium saucepan, heat sugar and 3 tablespoons (45 grams) water over high heat, being careful not to splash sides of pan. (It should be the consistency of wet sand.) Use remaining 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water to brush down sides of pan, and stir to help sugar dissolve. (Do not stir once it starts to boil.) Cook until desired light amber color is reached. Remove from heat; slowly add cream, whisking until combined. (Mixture will bubble up.) Add butter, a few cubes at a time, whisking until combined. Stir in vanilla. Let cool to room temperature.

Vanilla Glaze
Makes 1 cup

- **2 cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- **½ cup (120 grams) heavy whipping cream**
- **1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract**

1. In a medium bowl, place confectioners' sugar. Slowly whisk in cream until smooth. Whisk in vanilla. Use immediately.

Candied Pecans
Makes 4 cups

- **½ cup (110 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
- **1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon**
- **¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt**
- **1 large egg white (30 grams)**
- **3 cups (426 grams) pecan halves**

1. Preheat oven to 300°F (150°C). Lightly spray a rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together brown sugar, cinnamon, and salt.
3. In a large bowl, whisk egg white until foamy. Whisk in sugar mixture. Add pecans, tossing gently to coat. Spread in a single layer on prepared pan.
4. Bake until golden, about 20 minutes, stirring halfway through baking. Let cool completely. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

HOW TO FILL YOUR BEIGNETS

PIERCING

Using a small paring knife, make a hole in side of each cooled beignet; using a small wooden skewer, hollow inside of each beignet. While the beignet will mostly fry with a neat little hollow inside, a wooden skewer will help clean out any lingering dough webbing for the praline cream to evenly fill the hollow.

FILLING

Place Praline Cream Filling in a pastry bag fitted with a ¼-inch round piping tip; pipe filling into beignets. Apply even pressure as you fill so the filling comes out in a slow, steady stream. Pipe too quickly or forcibly and you risk bursting your beignets with too much filling.

nuts about Peanuts

WHETHER WHOLE, CHOPPED, GROUND TO FLOUR, OR BLENDED TO MAKE CREAMY NUT BUTTER, THE VERSATILITY OF THE ICONIC PEANUT OFFERS UNRIVALED TEXTURE AND TASTE TO ANY BAKED GOOD. FROM A STACKED AND FROSTED MERINGUE LAYER CAKE TO TENDER BANANA-PEANUT BUTTER BISCUITS, THESE PEANUT-PACKED RECIPES OFFER NEW TWISTS ON A PANTRY FAVORITE.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM BATHIE / RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY TRICIA MANZANERO / STYLING BY MARY BETH JONES

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BANANA-PEANUT BUTTER BISCUITS

Makes 9 biscuits

If there were ever a match made in heaven, it would be banana and peanut butter. Defatted peanut butter powder plays a transformative role in this tender biscuit, providing structure and all the nutty flavor you love without adding any additional oil to weigh down the biscuits.

1¾ cups (219 grams) all-purpose flour
¾ cup (70 grams) powdered peanut butter*
3 tablespoons (36 grams) granulated sugar
3¾ teaspoons (18.75 grams) baking powder
1¼ teaspoons (2.5 grams) ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon ground ginger
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
⅛ teaspoon ground cloves
⅛ teaspoon ground cardamom
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
¾ cup (170 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed
½ cup (120 grams) cold whole buttermilk
¼ cup (57 grams) mashed ripe banana (about 1 medium banana)
1 teaspoon (6 grams) vanilla bean paste
1 large egg (50 grams), lightly beaten
Softened butter, to serve

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, sift together flour, powdered peanut butter, sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cloves, and cardamom. Whisk in salt. Using a pastry blender or 2 forks, cut in cold butter until mixture resembles coarse bread crumbs.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together cold buttermilk, banana, and vanilla bean paste. Add buttermilk mixture to flour mixture, stirring with a fork until a shaggy dough forms.
4. Turn out dough onto a clean surface, and pat into a 1-inch-thick rectangle (about 7½x5 inches). (Dough will start out crumbly but will come together.) Cut dough crosswise into thirds. Stack thirds on top of each other; roll or pat to 1-inch thickness, and carefully flour underneath dough. Using a 2½-inch round cutter dipped in flour, cut dough without twisting cutter, rerolling scraps as necessary. Place ½ inch apart on prepared pan. Freeze until cold, about 15 minutes.
5. Using a pastry brush, brush egg on top of dough.
6. Bake until golden brown, 15 to 20 minutes. Serve warm with softened butter.

**We used PB2 Original Powdered Peanut Butter, available at grocery stores and online at* amazon.com.

BROWN SUGAR-PEANUT PIE

Makes 1 (9-inch) pie

Why do pecans get to have all the fun? This Brown Sugar-Peanut Pie is a cinch to stir together with ingredients you likely already have in your pantry. Even with a sweet brown sugar filling bursting with honey, orange zest, and bourbon, classic salted cocktail peanuts steal the show.

Ginger Pie Dough (recipe follows)
1 cup (220 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar
⅓ cup (113 grams) clover honey
¼ cup (57 grams) unsalted butter, melted
2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature
1 tablespoon (15 grams) bourbon*
¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
½ teaspoon (3 grams) tightly packed orange zest
2¼ cups (340 grams) very roughly chopped salted cocktail peanuts

1. Position oven rack in center of oven. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Let Ginger Pie Dough stand at room temperature until slightly softened, 10 to 15 minutes.
3. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 12-inch circle (about ⅛ inch thick), lightly flouring rolling pin and surface as needed. Transfer to a 9-inch pie plate, pressing into bottom and up sides. Trim excess dough, if necessary, leaving a ¾- to 1-inch overhang from inner edge of plate; fold edges under, and crimp, if desired. Freeze until firm, about 10 minutes.
4. Top frozen dough with parchment paper, letting ends extend over edges of plate. Add pie weights.
5. Bake until edges are just set, about 10 to 20 minutes. Carefully remove parchment and weights; let cool on a wire rack for 30 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F (180°C). Position oven rack in lower third of oven.
6. In a large bowl, whisk together brown sugar, honey, melted butter, eggs, egg yolk, bourbon, salt, and orange zest until well combined, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Stir in peanuts; pour into prepared crust.
7. Bake until filling is set and puffed and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 200°F (93°C), 36 to 46 minutes, loosely covering crust with foil to prevent excess browning, if necessary. Let cool completely on a wire rack.

**For an alcohol-free version, replace bourbon with 1½ to 3 teaspoons (6 to 12 grams) vanilla extract.*

Ginger Pie Dough

Makes 1 (9-inch) crust

1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
1½ tablespoons (18 grams) granulated sugar
1½ teaspoons (3 grams) ground ginger
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
½ cup (113 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed
3 to 4 tablespoons (45 to 60 grams) ice water

1. In the work bowl of a food processor, place flour, sugar, ginger, and salt; pulse until combined, about 4 times. Add cold butter; pulse until butter cubes are peanut- to almond-size. Add 3 tablespoons (45 grams) ice water in two additions, pulsing until dough forms large clumps. Add remaining 1 tablespoon (15 grams) ice water if dough seems too dry.
2. Turn out dough onto a clean surface, and shape into a 5-inch disk. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

PEANUT-JALAPEÑO CORNBREAD

Makes 1 (9-inch) loaf

Two pantry staples, peanuts and cornmeal, come together to make the ultimate side dish. The addition of buttermilk creates a tender crumb, and chopped peanuts add flavorful crunch. Spicy jalapeño is balanced by a touch of sweet honey, and a nutty swirl of browned butter further complements the richness of the roasted peanuts.

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) vegetable oil
- 1½ cups (170 grams) stone-ground yellow cornmeal
- ¾ cup (94 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking powder
- 1½ cups (360 grams) whole buttermilk, room temperature
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature
- 1 tablespoon (21 grams) clover honey, plus more to serve
- ¾ cup (107 grams) honey-roasted peanuts, roughly chopped and divided
- ½ cup (57 grams) ¼-inch-chopped seeded jalapeño

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. In a light-colored 9-inch metal skillet (see Note), melt butter over medium heat. Cook until butter solids are amber colored and nutty in aroma, 7 to 12 minutes. Pour browned butter into a medium heatproof bowl; let cool for 10 minutes.
3. In a 9-inch cast-iron skillet, place oil; place skillet in oven until hot, about 8 minutes.
4. In a large bowl, whisk together cornmeal, flour, salt, baking soda, and baking powder.
5. In another medium bowl, whisk together buttermilk, 3 tablespoons (37 grams) browned butter, egg, egg yolk, and honey. Whisk buttermilk mixture into cornmeal mixture until combined. Fold in two-thirds of peanuts and jalapeño.
6. Remove hot skillet from oven; carefully pour batter over hot oil in skillet, spreading into an even layer with a small offset spatula. Sprinkle with remaining peanuts.
7. Bake until golden brown and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 18 to 22 minutes, loosely covering with foil to prevent excess browning, if necessary. Let cool in skillet for 15 minutes. Serve warm with honey and remaining browned butter.

Note: *It's important to be able to see the butter solids brown, which can be difficult in many dark-colored cast-iron skillets. If baking in a 9-inch enamel-coated cast-iron skillet with a light-colored interior, feel free to brown the butter first in the same skillet. Be sure to wipe the skillet clean before adding oil and preheating.*

COFFEE-PEANUT MERINGUE CAKE

Makes 1 (6-inch) cake

In this nutty mix-up of the traditional French dacquoise, almonds and hazelnuts are swapped out for finely chopped peanuts. Roasted notes from coffee in the buttercream complement the peanut meringue, and the creamy-crunchy combination leads to a divine sensory experience.

5 large egg whites (150 grams), room temperature
¼ teaspoon cream of tartar
⅛ teaspoon kosher salt
¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
¾ cup (98 grams) very finely chopped dry-roasted lightly salted peanuts (see Notes)
1 teaspoon (6 grams) vanilla bean paste
Coffee German Buttercream (recipe follows)
Garnish: very roughly chopped dry-roasted lightly salted peanuts

1. Preheat oven to 250°F (130°C). Using a permanent marker, trace 6 (6-inch) circles ¾ inch apart on 2 sheets of nonstick parchment paper; turn parchment over, and place on 2 rimmed baking sheets.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat egg whites, cream of tartar, and salt at medium-high speed until foamy. Add sugar in a slow, steady stream, beating until glossy, stiff peaks form and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Gently fold in one-third of finely chopped peanuts and vanilla bean paste just until combined; gently fold in remaining finely chopped peanuts in two additions just until combined.
3. Working quickly, spoon meringue mixture into a pastry bag fitted with a ½-inch round piping tip (Wilton No. 2A). Starting from outer edge of drawn circles and moving inward, quickly pipe meringue mixture onto prepared parchment. Using a small offset spatula, gently smooth, fill, and level meringue rounds where necessary.
4. Bake until golden, dry, and mostly firm to the touch (meringues will continue to firm as they cool), 2 to 3 hours (see Notes), rotating pans halfway through baking. Let cool completely on pans on wire racks.
5. Place a cooled meringue round on a serving plate. Using a small offset spatula, spread ¾ cup (126 grams) Coffee German Buttercream onto meringue round. Top with second meringue round; spread ¾ cup (126 grams) buttercream on top. Repeat procedure three times, and top with remaining meringue round, flat side down. Spread remaining buttercream on top and sides of stacked meringue rounds. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Garnish with roughly chopped peanuts, if desired. Let stand at room temperature for 15 to 20 minutes before slicing and serving.

Notes: *Dry-roasted peanuts are the best choice for this cake, as the dry-roasting method uses heat without additional oil. This reduces the chance of deflating the meringue, keeping the airy matrix fluffy before it is baked into crispy cake layers.*

On very humid days, meringue rounds could take up to 30 minutes longer to bake. Be sure to judge by doneness qualifiers, not just time.

COFFEE GERMAN BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 7 cups

1⅓ cups (267 grams) granulated sugar
⅓ cup (40 grams) cornstarch
¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
2 large eggs (100 grams)
2 large egg yolks (37 grams)
1½ cups (360 grams) whole milk
1½ tablespoons (19.5 grams) vanilla extract
2⅔ cups (604 grams) unsalted butter, softened
¼ cup (12 grams) dark-roast instant coffee granules
1 tablespoon (15 grams) water

1. In a large bowl, whisk together sugar, cornstarch, and salt. Add eggs and egg yolks; whisk until well combined, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
2. In a medium saucepan, heat milk over medium heat, stirring frequently, until steaming. (Do not boil.) Gradually whisk warm milk into sugar mixture. Return mixture to saucepan; cook, whisking constantly, until thickened, slightly lumpy, and starting to bubble, about 4 minutes. Cook, whisking constantly, for 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Whisk in vanilla. (Mixture should now be smooth.) Pour into a large baking dish. Cover with a piece of plastic wrap, pressing wrap directly onto surface of custard to prevent a skin from forming. Refrigerate until cool, about 1 hour.
3. Let custard stand at room temperature for 40 minutes; stir until smooth and softened.
4. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter at medium speed until creamy, smooth, and light, about 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add custard, about 1 to 2 tablespoons (16 to 36 grams) at a time, beating until combined after each addition and stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
5. In a small bowl, stir together coffee granules and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water until granules are dissolved.
6. Switch to the whisk attachment. Add coffee mixture to butter mixture, and beat at medium speed until light and fluffy, about 4 minutes. Use immediately.

PRO TIP
Plan to serve the same day to get the crispest layers, as the meringue will soften over time in the refrigerator.

MADE WITH MILK FROM GRASS-FED COWS
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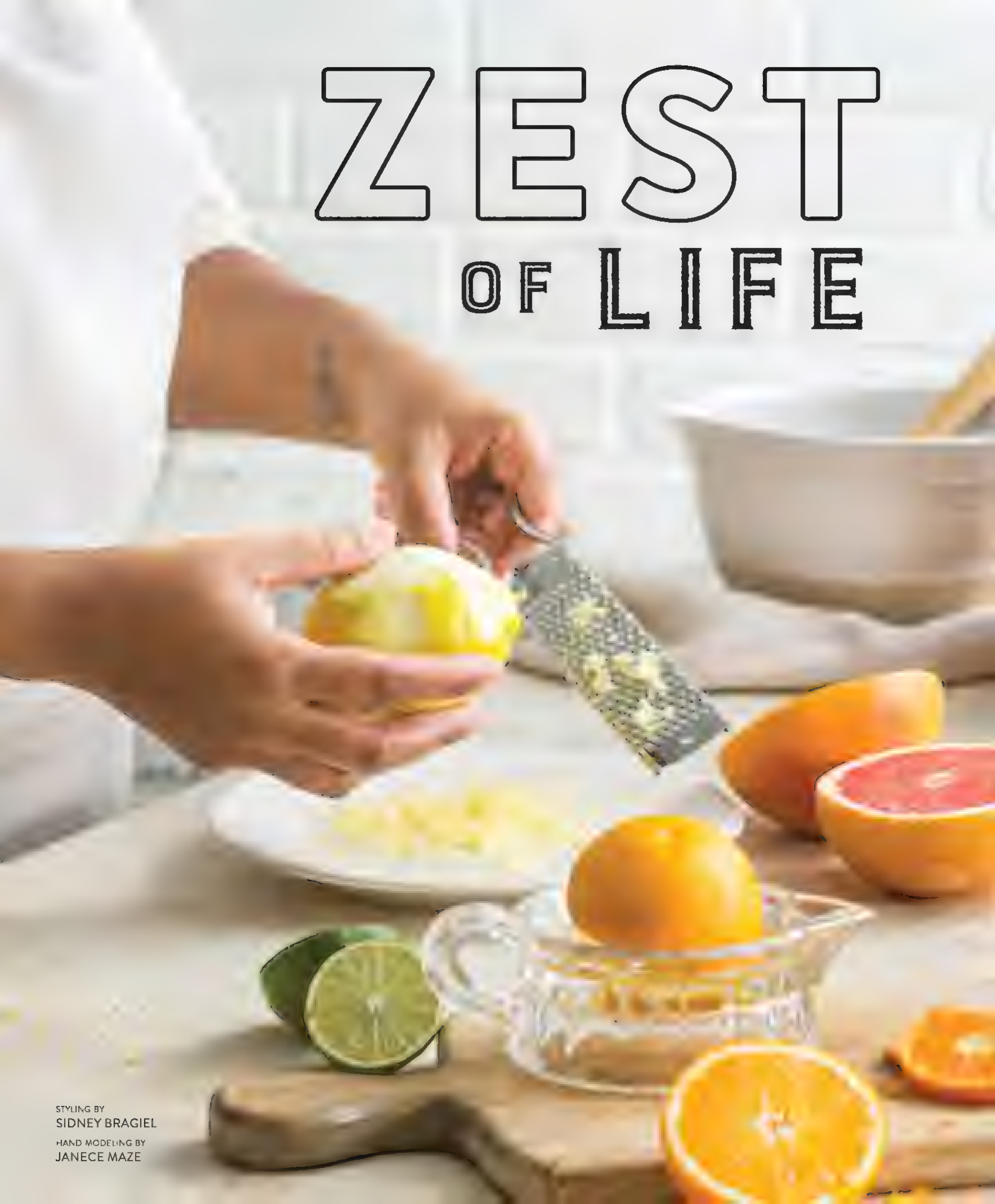


STYLING BY
SIDNEY BRAGIEL

HAND MODELING BY
JANECE MAZE

APPROPRIATELY NAMED “FLAVEDO” IN SCIENTIFIC TERMS, THE THIN, OUTERMOST SKIN OF CITRUS FRUIT IS A FLAVOR POWERHOUSE. THIS LAYER CONCEALS TINY POCKETS OF FRAGRANT OILS, EAGERLY WAITING TO BE HARNESSED. FROM FUDGY ORANGE BROWNIE COOKIES TO A GORGEOUS OMBRÉ GRAPEFRUIT LAYER CAKE, THESE ZESTY RECIPES WILL HAVE YOU UNLOCKING THE POWER OF THE PEEL.

MIXED CITRUS CURD CRUMB CAKE

Makes 1 (9-inch) cake

With this citrus-packed crumb cake, good things come in threes. A fresh blend of mandarin, lime, and lemon comes together to make a silky, tart curd, which is layered between tender cake and a crunchy streusel topping.

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ⅔ cup (133 grams) granulated sugar
- ⅓ cup (73 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cardamom
- 1 cup (240 grams) sour cream, room temperature
- Mixed Citrus Curd (recipe follows)
- Cinnamon-Ginger Streusel (recipe follows)
- Citrus Glaze (recipe follows)
- Garnish: lemon zest, lime zest, mandarin zest

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray a 9-inch square baking pan with cooking spray. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until fluffy, about 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla. (Mixture may look slightly curdled at this point, but batter will come together.)
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, salt, and cardamom. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with sour cream, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating until combined after each addition and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Spoon batter into prepared pan; using a small offset spatula, smooth into an even layer. Dollop Mixed Citrus Curd onto batter in pan; using a small offset spatula, spread into an even layer, leaving a ¼-inch border around sides of pan. Crumble Cinnamon-Ginger Streusel in large clumps evenly on top.
4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 45 to 50 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking and loosely covering with foil to prevent excess browning, if necessary. Let cool in pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan. Serve warm or at room temperature. Drizzle with Citrus Glaze before serving. Garnish with zests, if desired.

Mixed Citrus Curd

Makes about 1¼ cups

- 2 large eggs (100 grams)
- 2 large egg yolks (37 grams)
- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) packed lemon zest
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) packed lime zest
- 2½ tablespoons (37.5 grams) fresh lime juice
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) packed mandarin zest
- 2½ tablespoons (37.5 grams) fresh mandarin juice
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ cup (57 grams) unsalted butter, cubed

1. Place a fine-mesh sieve over a medium heatproof bowl; set aside.
2. In another medium heatproof bowl, whisk together eggs and egg yolks until well combined; set aside.
3. In a medium saucepan, stir together sugar, lemon zest and juice, lime zest and juice, mandarin zest and juice, and salt. Cook over medium-low heat until sugar dissolves and mixture begins to steam. (Do not boil.) Pour citrus mixture into egg mixture in a slow, steady stream, whisking constantly. Return mixture to saucepan. Cook, stirring slowly and constantly in a figure eight motion with a silicone spatula, until mixture is thickened and can coat the back of a spoon and an instant-read thermometer registers 175°F (79°C) to 180°F (82°C), 10 to 12 minutes. Add butter, 1 to 2 cubes at a time, stirring until melted after each addition.
4. Press curd through prepared sieve, discarding any solids. Cover with a piece of plastic wrap, pressing wrap directly onto surface of curd to prevent a skin from forming. Refrigerate until well chilled and set, at least 2 hours.

Cinnamon-Ginger Streusel

Makes 1½ cups

- ⅓ cup (67 grams) granulated sugar
- ¼ cup (55 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, melted
- 1⅓ cups (167 grams) all-purpose flour
- ¾ teaspoon (1.5 grams) ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking powder
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon

1. In a medium bowl, stir together sugars and salt until well combined. Stir in melted butter until well combined.
2. In another medium bowl, whisk together flour, ginger, baking powder, and cinnamon. Add flour mixture to sugar mixture, stirring until well combined. Let stand at room temperature until ready to use.

Citrus Glaze

Makes ½ cup

- 1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 2½ teaspoons (12.5 grams) fresh mandarin juice
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) fresh lime juice

1. In a medium bowl, stir together all ingredients until smooth and well combined. Use immediately.

LAYERED GRAPEFRUIT CAKE

Makes 1 (9-inch) cake

The classic cocktail popularized by Count Camillo Negroni consisting of gin, vermouth, and the perfect pour of Campari gets a makeover in this impressive ombré layer cake. The herbal bitterness from the ruby-hued liqueur creates citrus alchemy, magically enhancing the grapefruit and balancing the creamy sweetness of the Vanilla Whipped Topping.

- ¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1½ cups (300 grams) granulated sugar
- ¼ cup (25 grams) grapefruit zest (about 4 large grapefruits)
- 3 large eggs (150 grams), room temperature
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) fresh grapefruit juice, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 1¾ cups (219 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- ½ cup (120 grams) whole milk, room temperature
- Pink gel food coloring*
- Vanilla Whipped Topping (recipe follows), divided
- 2½ tablespoons (37.5 grams) Campari

1. Preheat oven to 325°F (170°C). Spray a 9-inch springform pan with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pan with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, sugar, and grapefruit zest at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in grapefruit juice and vanilla. (Mixture may look slightly curdled at this point, but batter will come together.)
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. In a small bowl, stir together milk and food coloring*. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with milk mixture, beating until combined after each addition and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Spoon batter into prepared pan, smoothing top with a small offset spatula.
4. Bake for 35 minutes; cover with foil, and bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 5 to 7 minutes more. Let cool in pan for 5 minutes. Remove sides of pan; let cake cool completely on base of pan on a wire rack.
5. Using a serrated knife, level cooled cake. Wrap a 30x4-inch strip of parchment paper around top half of cake, fitting it flush around sides to form a collar; securely staple together. (You can use more than one strip of parchment, if necessary.) Replace sides of pan.
6. In a medium bowl, stir together 2¼ cups (330 grams) Vanilla Whipped Topping and Campari until well combined. Transfer Campari topping to a pastry bag, and cut a ½-inch opening in tip; pipe evenly onto cake. Using a small offset spatula, spread into an even layer. Using a paper towel, clean any smears of Campari topping off parchment. Freeze for 25 minutes.
7. Whisk remaining Vanilla Whipped Topping until thickened, if necessary; spoon onto frozen Campari topping, smoothing into an even layer and swirling as desired using the back of a spoon. Loosely cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or up to overnight.
8. Carefully remove sides of pan and parchment. Smooth sides and patch any holes in topping, if necessary. Serve immediately.

**We used 8 drops of Wilton Color Right Performance Pink Food Coloring.*

Vanilla Whipped Topping

Makes about 6½ cups

- 8 ounces (226 grams) cream cheese, softened
- ¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons (174 grams) granulated sugar
- 2⅔ cups (640 grams) cold heavy whipping cream
- 1¼ teaspoons (5 grams) vanilla extract

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat cream cheese and sugar at medium speed until smooth and well combined, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Reduce mixer speed to medium-low; slowly add one-third of cold cream, beating until smooth and stopping frequently to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on medium speed, gradually add vanilla and remaining cold cream, beating until thickened and medium peaks form. (Do not overmix.)

ORANGE-CHOCOLATE BROWNIE COOKIES

Makes about 9 cookies

Zesty orange and bittersweet chocolate may seem like an odd couple, but just like in the classic film, each makes its counterpart even better. Acidity from the Candied Orange Peel cuts perfectly through the rich decadence of the chocolate and enhances the bittersweet notes in this delectably fudgy, faultlessly chewy cookie.

- **7 ounces (198 grams) 60% cacao bittersweet chocolate baking bars*, chopped and divided**
- **3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- **¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar**
- **¼ cup (55 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
- **1 teaspoon (1 gram) instant espresso powder***
- **1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- **½ teaspoon (1 gram) packed orange zest**
- **¼ teaspoon kosher salt**
- **1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
- **½ cup (63 grams) all-purpose flour**
- **2 tablespoons (10 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder**
- **½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking powder**
- **⅓ cup (59 grams) plus 1½ tablespoons (17 grams) lightly packed chopped Candied Orange Peel (recipe follows), divided**

1. In the top of a double boiler, combine 4 ounces (113 grams) chocolate and butter. Cook over simmering water, stirring occasionally, until melted and smooth. Remove from heat; add sugars, espresso powder, vanilla, orange zest, and salt, whisking until well combined. Let cool for 5 minutes. Whisk in egg.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, and baking powder. Add flour mixture to chocolate mixture, stirring until just a few bits of flour remain. Fold in ⅓ cup (59 grams) Candied Orange Peel and 2 ounces (57 grams) chocolate. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. Using a 3-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 53 grams each), and roll into balls. Place at least 2 to 3 inches apart on prepared pan; flatten each dough ball into a 2¼-inch disk (about ½ inch thick), pressing together any cracks in edges if necessary. Gently press remaining 1 ounce (28 grams) chocolate and remaining 1½ tablespoons (17 grams) Candied Orange Peel into tops of dough disks.
5. Bake until tops are lightly cracked, edges are set, and centers look slightly underdone, about 10 minutes. Let cool on pan for 2 minutes. Carefully remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**We used Ghirardelli 60% Cacao Bittersweet Chocolate Baking Bars and Williams Sonoma Instant Espresso Powder.*

Candied Orange Peel

Makes about 1¼ cups

- **2 large navel oranges (560 grams)**
- **2 cups (400 grams) granulated sugar**
- **2 cups (480 grams) water**

1. Using a sharp knife, cut about ¼ inch off top and bottom ends of oranges so fruit can sit flat. Quarter oranges vertically; remove peels, including white pith, in one piece. Cut peel pieces lengthwise into ¼-inch-wide strips. Reserve fruit for another use.
2. In a large high-sided saucepan, combine peel strips and cold water to cover by 1 inch. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat; drain peel strips. Repeat procedure once.
3. In a clean large high-sided saucepan, bring sugar and 2 cups (480 grams) water to a boil over medium heat, stirring until sugar dissolves. Add peel strips, arranging in a single layer; simmer, stirring occasionally, until peels are tender and white piths are somewhat translucent, 35 to 40 minutes.
4. Remove peel strips using a slotted spoon, and arrange in a single layer on a wire rack placed over a parchment paper-lined rimmed baking sheet. Let cool for 1 hour or up to overnight. Reserve syrup for another use.

PRO TIP
A 3½- to 4-inch round cutter can be used to form still-warm cookies into a more circular shape, if desired. Place cutter around 1 cookie; gently move cutter in a circular, counterclockwise motion while making contact with edges of cookie until desired shape is reached. Repeat as needed.

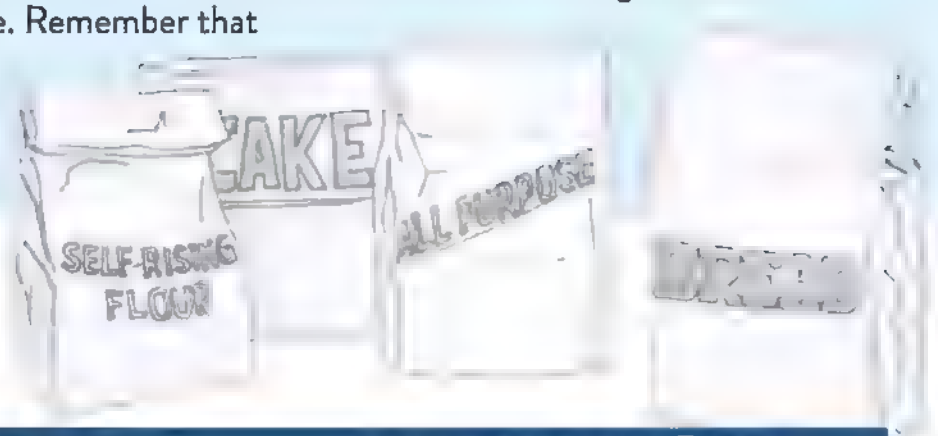
BAKING POSSIBLE

FROM PANDEMIC SHORTAGES TO FORGOTTEN INGREDIENTS, BRAVELY FACE ANY BAKING SCENARIO WITH THIS *BAKE FROM SCRATCH* AND *MACGYVER* CROSSOVER

By TRICIA MANZANERO
ILLUSTRATIONS BY KELLY REDDING

SMART SUBSTITUTIONS

Bare baking aisles, egg shortages, and empty flour canisters—what seemed like a baker's dystopia became a reality this past year. Extraordinary scenarios aside, that baking urge can strike at any time, even when you're out of an ingredient or when there's a blizzard outside. What to do when all the eggs are gone? Fret not, fearless bakers. We've assembled a list of common ingredients and their substitutes to help prep you for anything. Of course, baking is a science. Remember that recipe tweaks and pan swaps start as estimates, and results may vary. Use this primer as a starting point. Equipped with an adventurous attitude, you can—and will—get your bake on, no matter what.

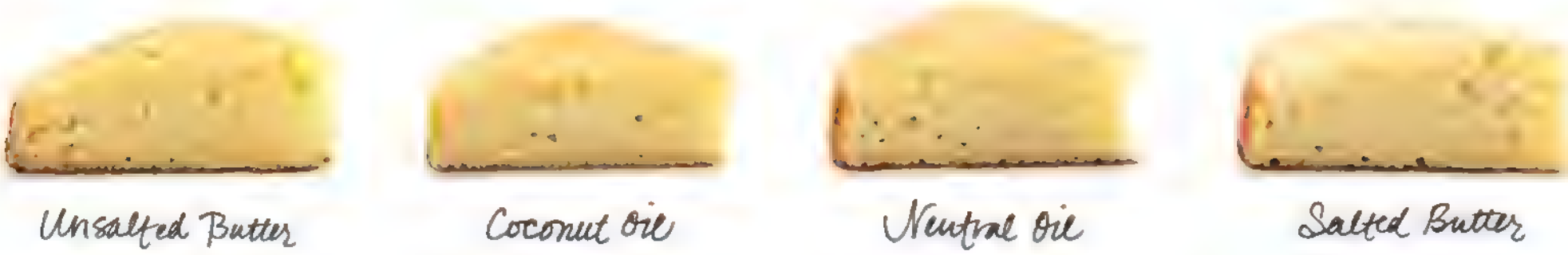


WRONG FLOUR?

DON'T HAVE . . .	SUBSTITUTION	THINGS TO CONSIDER
CAKE FLOUR	Measure out 1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour; remove 2 tablespoons (16 grams) flour and replace with 2 tablespoons (16 grams) cornstarch. Sift flour mixture 4 to 5 times before using.	Adding cornstarch helps mimic cake flour's lower protein content by preventing gluten formation. Baked goods, however, may still boast a heavier or coarser texture than those made with cake flour.
SELF-RISING FLOUR	Whisk together 1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour, 1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking powder, and ¼ teaspoon (1.5 grams) salt. Mix only what you'll use relatively soon. Baking powder grows less reactive over time.	Self-rising flour is often made from lower-protein soft wheat. By using higher-protein all-purpose flour, you may need to increase the liquid in your recipe. Baked goods may turn out a bit less tender, but they'll be just as tasty.
BREAD FLOUR	Replace bread flour with all-purpose flour using a 1:1 ratio, preferably by weight. If necessary, add 1 to 2 teaspoons (3 to 6 grams) all-purpose flour until desired texture is reached.	When swapping in all-purpose flour, your baked good may not have the same structure and chew. Beyond some textural and visual differences, though, you should end up with a delicious result.
ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR	Made from a mix of hard and soft wheat, all-purpose flour is a versatile baking workhorse. But when you're all out, substitute with the same amount of cake flour or bread flour by weight.	Consider what you're making. Using cake flour for a yeasted bread likely isn't ideal. Meanwhile, bread flour used in all-purpose recipes may need a little more liquid. Choose wisely, adjusting as needed.

NO BROWN SUGAR?

DON'T HAVE . . .	SUBSTITUTION	THINGS TO CONSIDER
LIGHT BROWN SUGAR	1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar plus 1 tablespoon (21 grams) molasses (not blackstrap)	Of all the mixing methods, we prefer the low-tech route. Using a bowl and a silicone spatula, stir together sugar and molasses until well combined.
DARK BROWN SUGAR	1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar plus 2 tablespoons (42 grams) molasses (not blackstrap)	



NO BUTTER?

UNSALTED BUTTER

Butter contributes flavor, moisture, and tenderness to baked goods. It can help in leavening, too. In cakes crafted via the creaming method, like our control cake pictured above, unsalted butter yields a sturdy yet tender layer with a buttery richness. Unsalted butter is often favored, offering control over salt and spice levels. Salted butter, however, still boasts a following. For recipes that call for salted butter, you can substitute unsalted using a 1:1 ratio, adding in ¼ teaspoon (1.5 grams) salt—or ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt—for every ½ cup (113 grams) butter.

COCONUT OIL

Coconut oil is derived from the white "meat" of mature coconuts. Refined varieties have a neutral flavor and aroma, along with a smoke point of 400°F (200°C). Unrefined oils—also called virgin or pure—retain coconut-forward qualities and a smoke point of 350°F (180°C). Substitute coconut oil for unsalted butter using a 1:1 ratio, making sure it's in the same state (melted, softened, etc.); since coconut oil contains more fat and less water than butter, adjust liquids as needed. Made with refined coconut oil, our cake was still sweet and tender but lacked any buttery flavor. Layers also baked flatter and had a closer-knit crumb.

NEUTRAL OIL

Neutral oils, like canola and vegetable, are mild in flavor and aroma. Liquid at room temperature, they can help make baked goods seem super moist. Though there's no set rule, start by substituting the butter in a recipe with three-fourths the amount of oil. So, for ½ cup (113 grams) butter, use 6 tablespoons (84 grams) oil. For our cake, we mixed the oil with our liquids before adding dry ingredients; layers came out moist, tender, and sweet, baking up more level than our control, although not as buttery. For baked goods like biscuits where solid butter is vital, though, we suggest sticking to the recipe.

SALTED BUTTER

Salted butter is known for its taste and longer shelf life. It can be substituted for unsalted butter using a 1:1 ratio. Note, though, that salt content varies between brands. Depending on the recipe, skip any added salt, or for every ½ cup (113 grams) butter, reduce salt by ¼ teaspoon (1.5 grams) (½ teaspoon [1.5 grams] kosher salt). Such swaps should work for more-forgiving baked goods, like cookies, but are less ideal for recipes like breads where exact ratios are key. Visually and texturally, our salted butter cake closely resembled our control. Its sweet flavor, though, was a bit less balanced.

NO RIPE BANANAS?

DON'T HAVE . . .	SUBSTITUTION	THINGS TO CONSIDER
RIPENED BANANAS	Quick "ripened" bananas: Preheat oven to 300°F (150°C). Separate firm, ripe bananas; place, unpeeled, on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Bake until soft and peels are blackened, 20 to 30 minutes. Let cool to room temperature, peel, and use as needed.	This tip can be clutch when you need a quick baking fix, but it won't miraculously make green bananas ripe. They'll soften but still taste starchy. Reach for firm, ripe bananas for best results.

NO EXTRACT OR ALCOHOL?

DON'T HAVE . . .	SUBSTITUTION
LIQUID EXTRACT	You can swap liqueur for extract but will often need more. For example, replacing 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract could require 1 to 2 teaspoons (5 to 10 grams) bourbon. For 1 teaspoon (4 grams) almond extract, you may need 4 to 8 teaspoons (20 to 40 grams) amaretto. If adding a significant amount, adjust liquid ingredients.
RED WINE OR WHITE WINE	Some 1:1 red wine substitutes include red grape juice, pomegranate juice, cranberry juice, and nonalcoholic red wine. For white wine, options include white grape juice, apple juice, and nonalcoholic white wine. Regardless of what you choose, keep in mind that these swaps may yield slightly different results.

NO EGGS?

Forget to buy eggs for the umpteenth time? No sweat. We've cracked into a slew of smart egg substitutes. For best results, use these in recipes calling for 3 large eggs (150 grams) or less, keeping in mind that end results may differ slightly from the original recipe.

EGG

Flavor-packed multitaskers, eggs act as binders, emulsifiers, leavening agents, and more. They're a hard act to follow, but handy substitutes exist when you've run out or are just baking sans eggs. Note that not all options are created equal. We baked a basic brown sugar muffin as our control to help demonstrate the differences.

AQUAFABA

1 large egg (50 grams) ≈ 3 tablespoons (45 grams) aquafaba

Aquafaba is the liquid left over after cooking legumes. But for our purposes, we're talking chickpea liquid, the canned kind specifically. Besides binding powers, this starchy liquid can whip up and trap air. We lightly whisked ours until foamy before adding to our recipe. The chickpea smell and flavor dissipated post-bake, resulting in moist muffins, with structure, flavor, and height comparable to our control.

PUMPKIN

1 large egg (50 grams) ≈ ¼ cup (62 grams) canned pumpkin

More than a fall baking favorite, unsweetened pumpkin purée offers a perennial egg substitute. Often made from a mix of winter squash, this canned staple binds beautifully but boasts little leavening power. Note that it adds distinct color and some flavor to baked goods, too. Mixed into our muffins, pumpkin purée added great structure, moisture, and a slight vegetal sweetness, along with a deep amber hue.

BANANA

1 large egg (50 grams) ≈ ¼ cup (57 grams) mashed ripe banana

That forgotten brown banana can be the egg stand-in you're searching for. Peeled and mashed, ripe banana binds like a champ. Expect it to add color and flavor to baked goods but little in the leavening department. Though shorter than our control, our test muffins were golden brown, moist, tender, and bursting with banana flavor. Not a banana fan? Applesauce offers a more neutral, though still fruit-flavored, option.

TOFU

1 large egg (50 grams) ≈ ¼ cup (59 grams) drained blended silken tofu

True to its name, silken tofu has a smooth, custard-like texture. It's relatively flavorless and makes a suitable egg substitute once drained and puréed in a blender or food processor. Our tofu-infused muffins baked less brown than our control. Despite more height than our pumpkin or banana tests, they still had a moist, slightly dense texture.

COMMERCIAL EGG REPLACEMENTS

Follow package directions for how to replace 1 large egg (50 grams)

Commercial egg replacements are powdered products meant to mimic eggs' role in baking recipes. Found in many grocery stores' baking aisles, each brand has its own proprietary ingredient mix, so be sure to read labels before making your pick. Our egg replacement test yielded golden-brown results, with a height, flavor, and texture quite like our control muffins.

FLAX SEED

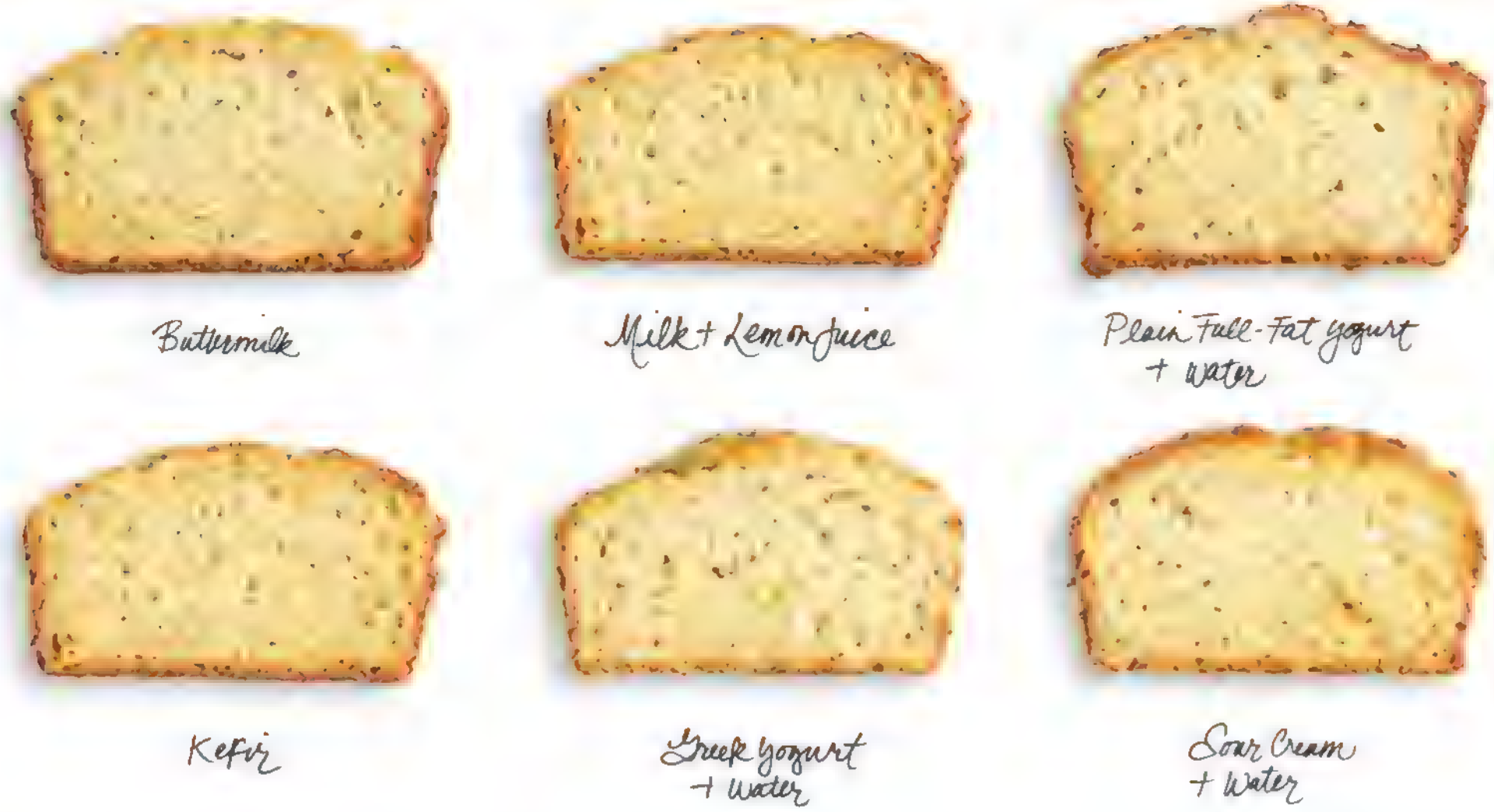
1 large egg (50 grams) ≈ 1 tablespoon (6 grams) ground flaxseed meal + 3 tablespoons (45 grams) water

It's a simple mix: ground flax seed and water. A quick 5-minute rest yields a "flax egg"—great for binding but lackluster when it comes to leavening. True to form, our flax muffins baked squatter and less golden than our control. Structurally, though, they remained moist and tender, with a lightly nutty flavor thanks to the omega-3-rich flax.

CHIA

1 large egg (50 grams) ≈ 1 tablespoon (10 grams) chia seeds + 3 tablespoons (45 grams) water

Combine chia seeds with water, and wait for 5 minutes. Like magic, the mixture turns viscous and thick, mimicking a beaten egg consistency. Chia seeds are grade-A binders, rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Leavening, however, is not their forte. In terms of height, moisture, and browning, our chia muffins baked like our flaxseed batch, with some added texture and earthy flavor from the crunchy seeds.



NO BUTTERMILK?

Don't let a lack of buttermilk sour your baking plans. Some resourceful replacements could save the day.

BUTTERMILK

Buttermilk is favored for the tenderness and tang it gives baked goods. Our control quick bread was no exception. But for times when you're out, give one of the following swaps a try.

MILK + LEMON JUICE

¾ cup plus 3 tablespoons (225 grams) whole milk + 1 tablespoon (15 grams) fresh lemon juice or white vinegar = 1 cup (240 grams) buttermilk. Let stand for 5 minutes before using.

PLAIN WHOLE YOGURT + WATER

¾ cup (180 grams) plain full-fat yogurt + ¼ cup (60 grams) water = 1 cup (240 grams) buttermilk. The amount of water needed to achieve buttermilk consistency may vary depending on thickness of yogurt.

KEFIR

1 cup (240 grams) kefir = 1 cup (240 grams) buttermilk

GREEK YOGURT + WATER

⅓ cup (80 grams) whole milk plain Greek yogurt + ⅔ cup (160 grams) water = 1 cup (240 grams) buttermilk

SOUR CREAM + WATER

½ cup (120 grams) sour cream + ½ cup (120 grams) water = 1 cup (240 grams) buttermilk

WRONG YEAST?

DON'T HAVE . . .	SUBSTITUTION	THINGS TO CONSIDER
ACTIVE DRY YEAST	Substitute 1:1 with instant yeast.	For breads made by hand or in a stand mixer, you can use instant and active dry yeast interchangeably. Note that instant yeast doughs may rise faster, while active dry doughs may rise slower.
INSTANT YEAST	Substitute 1:1 with active dry yeast.	

SAVVY PAN SWAPS

Adapting a recipe for the pans you have on hand can boil down to some quick math

STEP 1

FIND YOUR PAN'S AREA

Area of a Square or Rectangular Pan = Length x Width
Area of a Round Pan = π x radius²

As a brief refresher, π ≈ 3.14, and the radius is half of a round pan's diameter. Make sure to measure from inner edge to inner edge. So, for a 9-inch round cake pan, the area is equal to 3.14 x (4.5 x 4.5), which is about 64 square inches. Divide the area of your desired pan by the area of the original recipe's pan to get a scaling factor. Multiply this scaling factor by your original recipe amounts to yield adjusted ratios, scaled up or down, for your desired pan.

Area of Desired Pan
÷ Area of Original Pan

= Scaling Factor

From there, you can tweak, rounding or adjusting amounts to make numbers cleaner. Need part of an egg? Whisk one up, weigh it, and then scale out the portion needed by weight.

STEP 2

FACTOR IN VOLUME

To do so, multiply the height of a pan by its area. So, for a 2-inch-tall 9-inch round cake pan, 64 square inches x 2 inches = 128 cubic inches. You can also find a pan's volume in cups by filling it with water, 1 cup at a time.

STEP 3

PICK A GAME PLAN

Pans with similar areas and volumes make more ideal swaps. You won't need to change much in terms of recipe ratios, baking temperatures, or cooking times. It's also safer to switch between high-sided pans (think Bundt pan to loaf pan) or between shallower pans (we're talking 2-inch-tall round to 2-inch-tall square).

Regardless, recipes can vary. Be sure to fill pans only halfway to two-thirds full. When facing a new recipe, be safe and fill halfway. Bake off any extra batter as mini loaves or cupcakes. Also, keep in mind what you're making. Butter and oil cakes, brownies, blondies, and quick breads are more forgiving. But for temperamental treats like angel food cakes, you may want to stick to the recipe. Be bold but smart with your baking, and delicious possibilities await. To get started, we've crafted a list of popular pans and some substitutes to help along the way. (See pages 71-72.)

POPULAR PAN CONVERSIONS AT A GLANCE

DON'T HAVE . . .	SUBSTITUTION	HOW-TO
2-INCH-TALL 8-INCH ROUND CAKE PAN	2-inch-tall 9-inch round cake pan	Scale up original recipe by 1.25, which means a 25% increase. Adjust numbers as needed. Make as directed, with a potentially longer baking time.
	9-inch cast-iron skillet	Make recipe as directed; check for doneness earlier. If baked good browns more than desired, try reducing oven temperature by 25 degrees next time.
2-INCH-TALL 9-INCH ROUND CAKE PAN	2-inch-tall 8-inch round cake pan	Scale down recipe by 0.75—that'll yield 75% of the original. Adjust numbers as needed. Make as directed, with a potentially shorter baking time.
	Standard 12-cup muffin pan	Place paper liners in cups, only filling two-thirds to three-fourths full. Bake at same temperature. Check doneness earlier using recipe's qualifiers.
2-INCH-TALL 8-INCH SQUARE BAKING PAN	2-inch-tall 9-inch round cake pan	With similar surface areas and volumes, an 8-inch square pan and a 9-inch round pan can typically be used interchangeably.
2-INCH-TALL 9-INCH SQUARE BAKING PAN	10-inch cast-iron skillet	Make recipe as directed; check for doneness earlier. If baked good browns more than desired, try reducing oven temperature by 25 degrees next time.
	2-inch-tall 10-inch round cake pan	For bakers who lack a 2-inch-tall 9-inch square baking pan, try a 2-inch-tall 10-inch round cake pan instead. Make recipe as directed, being sure to keep an eye on it.
	2-inch-tall 11x7-inch baking pan	An 11x7-inch pan can be swapped for a 2-inch-tall 9-inch square baking pan in a pinch. Make recipe as directed, being sure to keep an eye on it.

LIGHT VS. DARK METAL PANS
Often the darker the metal, the faster batter in contact will bake. If using a darker metal pan, consider dropping baking temperature by 25 degrees and checking for doneness earlier.

DON'T HAVE . . .	SUBSTITUTION	HOW-TO
13X9-INCH BAKING PAN	2 (2-inch-tall) 8-inch square baking pans	Divide batter between 2 (2-inch-tall) 8-inch square baking pans. Bake at same temperature. Check 15 minutes earlier than original recipe says.
	2 (2-inch-tall) 9-inch round cake pans	Divide batter between 2 (2-inch-tall) 9-inch round cake pans. Bake at same temperature. Check 15 minutes earlier than original recipe says.
	12-inch cast-iron skillet	Make recipe as directed; check for doneness earlier. If baked good browns more than desired, try reducing oven temperature by 25 degrees next time.
STANDARD 12-CUP MUFFIN PAN	8½x4½-inch loaf pan	Potentially reduce oven temperature by 25 to 50 degrees. Increase baking time as needed, using doneness qualifiers in original recipe.
8½X4½-INCH LOAF PAN	Standard 12-cup muffin pan	Potentially increase oven temperature by 25 to 50 degrees. Expect cooking time to decrease; bake until a wooden pick comes out clean.
10- OR 12-CUP BUNDT PAN	2 (8½x4½-inch) loaf pans	Divide batter between loaf pans, filling only two-thirds full. Bake at same temperature, checking 15 minutes earlier than original recipe says.
15-CUP BUNDT PAN	2 (9x5-inch) loaf pans	Divide batter between loaf pans, filling only two-thirds full. Bake at same temperature, checking 15 minutes earlier than original recipe says.

CRAFTY KITCHEN TOOLS

Whether baking at a vacation rental or at the house of that friend who barely cooks, we've all found ourselves in a kitchen with an oven but not much else. Armed with these creative culinary tricks, you'll be ready to bake no matter what kitchen you find yourself in.

NO MIXER?

WHIP OUT A DANISH DOUGH WHISK

Say goodbye to clumped-up spoons and dough-crusted hands. Equipped with overlapping circular coils, this whisk brings doughs and batters together quickly. In some cases, kneading may still be necessary, but the whisk's sleek design and small surface area incorporate flour and mix-ins efficiently, minimizing lumping and making cleanup easier. Handheld and perfectly portable, it'll be your new on-the-road baking go-to.

NO ROLLING PIN?

REACH FOR A WINE BOTTLE

When without a rolling pin, an empty, straight-sided wine bottle makes a great stand-in. Liquor, vinegar, and other similarly shaped vessels will do, too. Their cylindrical bodies and long, straight sides offer just the right shape and leverage. Just nix any labels and give bottles a wash, or wrap in plastic wrap if you're tight on time. Sans liquid works best, but full, unopened bottles will also work in a pinch.

NO ROUND CUTTER?

GO FOR A ROUND DRINKING GLASS

For a makeshift round cutter, turn to your cupboard. The round rim of a drinking glass, particularly a thin one, works wonders. Just give it a quick dip in flour for a clean cut and release. Grab glasses of different widths to craft a variety of sizes and then simply bake and decorate as desired.

NO PASTRY BAGS?

PICK RESEALABLE PLASTIC BAGS

Have things to pipe, but lack a proper pastry bag? A resealable plastic quart or gallon bag can get you through. Simply fill and twist the top shut and then give one bottom corner a snip; a ½-inch opening works well for heartier piping, while a ¼-inch opening is fit for more-delicate drizzles. To ensure it doesn't burst while you work, pick heavy-duty freezer-style bags and stick to softer mixes like frostings and glazes.

NO PIE WEIGHTS?

OPT FOR UNCOOKED BEANS OR RICE

When there's a crust to blind bake but you can't find your pie weights, grab a 2-pound bag of dried beans or uncooked rice. Poured into your parchment paper- or foil-lined crust, these shelf-stable pantry staples nestle into nooks and weigh your crust down properly, whether you're using a regular or deep-dish pie plate. You can also bag them up post-bake and reuse them another day.

NO MUFFIN PAN?

MOVE FOR MASON JAR BANDS

Good for more than just lids, Mason jar bands can double as a makeshift muffin pan. Simply place bands, right side up and evenly spaced, on a rimmed baking sheet. Place a sturdy paper or foil cupcake liner in each and then fill and bake as you would normally. When there's just a bit of extra batter to bake, this hack becomes particularly handy.

NO PASTRY BLENDER?

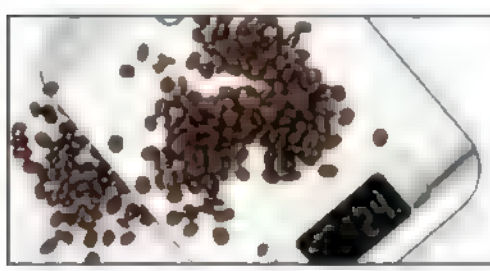
FIND TWO FORKS

Cutting in butter (or other fat) sans pastry blender is super simple. One or two forks will do the trick. Use the tines to cut in fat until pieces reach the right size. If needed, the forks can then be used to add in wet ingredients. Although you may need a bit more elbow grease, this method is still efficient and easy.

NO SERRATED KNIFE?

DIG FOR UNFLAVORED DENTAL FLOSS

Dental floss, in some cases, has us swearing off serrated knives. It can be pulled tight and used to cut soft cakes, or wrapped, crossed, and pulled taut around a cinnamon roll log for super clean slices. Just be sure to use the unflavored kind to avoid any unwanted menthol taste.



THE ESSENTIAL: A TRUSTY KITCHEN SCALE

For precision and consistency, we're big believers in baking by gram weight. Fortunately, they now make collapsible, super portable scales, so you can bake by weight, even away from home.

FALLING FOR FRANGIPANE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
JIM BATHIE
REC PE DEVELOPMENT BY
TRICIA MANZANERO
FOOD STYL NG BY
MEGAN LANKFORD
STYLING BY LUCY FINNEY

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page 81

Mini Galettes des Rois
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Berry Frangipane Cake
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Frangipane-Jam Buns
page 84

TIRAMISÙ FRANGIPANE THUMBPRINT COOKIES

Makes 22 to 24 cookies

These cookies transform all the rich flavors of tiramisù into a bite-size serving. Dutch process cocoa powder creates an incredibly soft dough that boasts roasted coffee flavors. Hiding beneath creamy Mascarpone Buttercream you'll find a rum frangipane.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ¾ cup plus 1 tablespoon (162 grams) granulated sugar
- 3 tablespoons (18 grams) dark-roast instant coffee granules
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water
- 2 large egg yolks (37 grams), room temperature
- 1 teaspoon (6 grams) vanilla bean paste
- 2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour
- ½ cup (43 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking powder
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- Rum Frangipane Filling (recipe follows)
- Mascarpone Buttercream (recipe follows)
- Garnish: Dutch process cocoa powder

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until creamy, about 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
3. In a small bowl, stir together instant coffee and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water until granules dissolve. Add coffee mixture, egg yolks, and vanilla bean paste to butter mixture; beat at medium speed just until combined.
4. In a medium bowl, sift together flour, cocoa, and baking powder; whisk in salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Scoop dough by 2 tablespoonfuls (about 29 grams each), and roll into balls. Place about 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Using the back of a ½-teaspoon dry measuring spoon, gently make an indentation in center of each ball.
5. Scoop 1 teaspoon (5 grams) Rum Frangipane Filling, and roll into a ball; place ball in indentation of 1 dough ball, and press into a rounded mound that completely fills indentation. Repeat with remaining Rum Frangipane Filling and remaining dough balls.
6. Bake, one batch at a time, until edges are dry and set, 9 to 12 minutes. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on wire racks.
7. Spoon Mascarpone Buttercream into a pastry bag fitted with a ½-inch round piping tip (Wilton No. 2A). Pipe about 4 teaspoons (about 15 grams) buttercream in center of each cooled cookie; using a small offset spatula, spread and swirl buttercream as desired. Garnish with cocoa, if desired.

Rum Frangipane Filling

Makes about ½ cup

- ⅔ cup (64 grams) superfine blanched almond flour
- 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature*
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) dark rum
- ¼ teaspoon (1 gram) almond extract
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

1. In a small bowl, stir together flour and sugar until well combined. Add butter and all remaining ingredients; stir until well combined, kneading together by hand if necessary.

**Unlike softened butter, room temperature butter should provide no resistance when pressed with a finger. At this point, the butter is soft enough to easily combine with your other ingredients.*

Mascarpone Buttercream

Makes about 2 cups

- ⅔ cup (150 grams) unsalted butter, softened (see Note)
- ⅛ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1⅓ cups (160 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) heavy whipping cream
- 5 ounces (142 grams) mascarpone cheese*, softened (see Note)

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and salt at medium speed until creamy, about 1 minute, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating just until combined. Beat in cream. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Fold in mascarpone by hand just until combined. (Do not overmix; mascarpone will start to break down.) Use immediately.

Note: *For best results, it's important that the butter and mascarpone are both softened and at about the same temperature. An instant-read thermometer inserted into the center of each is an easy way to gauge when they're ready to go. Our butter and mascarpone were at about 64°F (18°C). Mascarpone that gets too warm may be more likely to break. Try to handle the buttercream as little as possible; overworking it could cause the mascarpone to start breaking down.*

**We used Vermont Creamery Mascarpone.*

MINI GALETTES DES ROIS

Makes 5 (4-inch) galettes

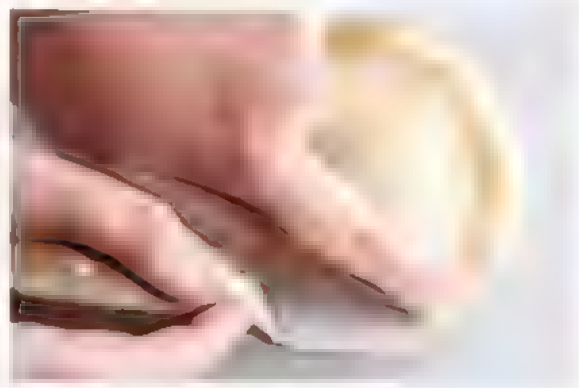
The galette des rois, or French king cake, is a traditional French pastry made to celebrate the Christian feast day of Epiphany, January 6, commemorating the day the three kings arrived to visit the infant Jesus. Combining an incredibly easy recipe for rough puff pastry and a simple almond filling, these beauties will make you the reigning champion of puff pastry. We also show you how to rule those gorgeous regal patterns with just a few simple cuts.

1¼ cups (284 grams) unsalted butter
2¼ cups (281 grams) plus 1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) all-purpose flour, divided
2⅛ teaspoons (6 grams) kosher salt, divided
½ cup (120 grams) ice water
3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature
½ cup (48 grams) superfine natural almond flour
¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar
2 large egg yolks (38 grams), divided
¼ teaspoon (1 gram) almond extract
1 whole almond (optional)
1 teaspoon (5 grams) water, room temperature, plus more for brushing

1. Cube butter, and freeze for 30 minutes.
2. In the work bowl of a food processor, place 2¼ cups (281 grams) all-purpose flour and 2 teaspoons (6 grams) salt; pulse until combined. Add frozen butter; pulse until butter is dime-size. With processor running, add ½ cup (120 grams) ice water in a slow, steady stream just until mixture forms a ball. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface; shape into a 6-inch square. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
3. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 15x7-inch rectangle, lightly flouring surface as needed to prevent sticking. Fold dough in thirds, like a letter, and rotate 90 degrees. Repeat procedure twice. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 20 minutes.
4. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
5. Divide dough in half. On a lightly floured surface, roll one half into a 12x9-inch rectangle (about ⅛ inch thick), lightly flouring surface and dough as needed to prevent sticking. Using a 4-inch round cutter, cut 5 circles. Place 2 inches apart on a prepared pan. Repeat procedure with remaining dough and remaining prepared pan.
6. In a small bowl, stir room temperature butter until creamy. Add almond flour, sugar, 1 egg yolk (19 grams), almond extract, remaining 1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) all-purpose flour, and remaining ⅛ teaspoon salt; stir until well combined.
7. Using the tines of a fork, dock 5 dough circles all over. Spread 2 tablespoons (about 30 grams) frangipane on each docked circle, leaving a ½- to ¾-inch border around edges. Place whole almond (if using) in frangipane on 1 circle. Brush dough edges with room temperature water. Top with remaining dough circles, lining up edges and pressing down to seal with bottom circles. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
8. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
9. In a small bowl, whisk together 1 teaspoon (5 grams) room temperature water and remaining 1 egg yolk (19 grams).
10. Using your fingertip, press down dough edge; using the back of a small knife, simultaneously make a notch just to the side of your fingertip as if marking its location. Move fingertip to other side of notch, and repeat procedure all the way around edge. Repeat with remaining galettes. Score desired design on top of each galette. Brush tops with egg wash, being careful not to let egg wash drip down sides. Cut 5 to 6 small discreet slits in scored design to allow steam to escape.
11. Bake for 15 minutes. Rotate pans, reduce oven temperature to 375°F (190°C), and bake until deep golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes more, re-opening slits in tops if needed. Serve warm or let cool completely on a wire rack.

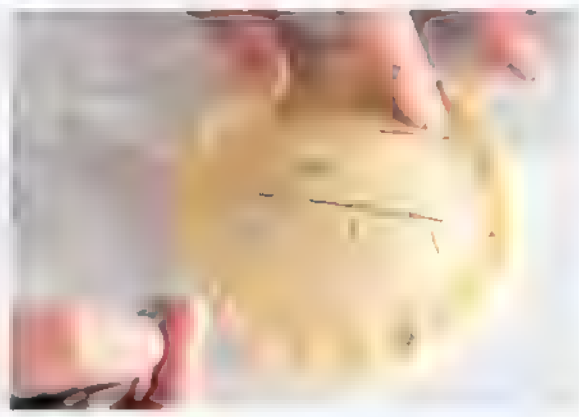
PRO TIP
In France, it's tradition to bake a *fève* (bean) into the galette. The lucky guest to find the fève in their slice got to be *roi* (king) for the day. Today's fèves include a range of trinkets and figurines of various sizes, shapes, and materials. For ours, we opted for an edible, affordable, and still very enjoyable almond, but feel free to substitute another favorite nut or piece of dried fruit.

PATTERN PERFECTION
A simple guide to scoring an elegant herringbone pattern



1. To create a traditional scalloped edge, using your fingertip, press down dough edge; using the back of a small knife, simultaneously make a notch just to the side of your fingertip as if marking its location. Move fingertip to other side of notch, and repeat procedure all the way around edge.

2. Using a small knife, score 3 evenly spaced, parallel lines across top to create 4 columns. (Be careful not to cut through pastry.) Score evenly spaced diagonal lines all the way down one column.



3. In adjacent column, score diagonal lines that mirror your first set to create a slight "V" shape. Repeat procedure in outer columns, only scoring up to ¼ inch from dough edges. (The "V" shape will be reversed.) Brush tops with egg wash, being careful not to let egg wash drip down sides. Cut 5 to 6 small slits discreetly in scored design to allow steam to escape.

BERRY FRANGIPANE CAKE

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

Almond-scented cake batter is swirled with traditional frangipane, which adds nutty flavor and tenderness to the crumb. Studded with berries and gently dusted with confectioners' sugar, this cake is simple but gorgeous. As a bonus, this recipe calls for frozen berries, meaning this cake is always in season.

Frangipane:

- ⅔ cup (150 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature*
- 1½ cups (144 grams) superfine natural almond flour
- ¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
- ¼ cup (31 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- 1 large egg white (30 grams)
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) almond extract

Batter:

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
- ¾ teaspoon (3 grams) vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon (1 gram) almond extract
- 1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour
- ¾ teaspoon (3.75 grams) baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ cup (60 grams) whole milk, room temperature

- ½ cup (120 grams) drained thawed frozen mixed berries (large berries halved if necessary), patted dry
- 2 tablespoons (15 grams) sliced almonds

Confectioners' sugar, for dusting

1. Preheat oven to 325°F (170°C). Spray a light-colored 8-inch metal springform pan with baking spray with flour. Line bottom and sides of pan with parchment paper.

2. For frangipane: In a medium bowl, stir butter until creamy. Add almond flour, sugar, all-purpose flour, egg, egg white, salt, and almond extract; stir until well combined. Cover and set aside.

3. For batter: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in egg; scrape sides of bowl. Add extracts, beating just until combined.

4. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Using a small offset spatula or the back of a spoon, spread 1 cup (about 238 grams) batter into prepared pan. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop (see Notes), alternately dollop 1 cup (about 240 grams) frangipane and remaining batter in a checkerboard-like pattern onto batter in pan; layer some batter on top of frangipane dollops and vice versa. (It's OK that dollops don't go all the way to edges of pan.) Drag a butter knife through center of each dollop a few times to swirl together. Tap pan on a kitchen towel-lined counter several times to settle batter.

5. Spoon remaining frangipane into a pastry bag; cut a ½-inch opening in tip. Pipe onto batter in pan, spreading with a small offset spatula. Press berries into frangipane; sprinkle with almonds.

6. Bake until edges are golden brown, top feels dry and set, and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 202°F (94°C) to 210°F (99°C), 52 minutes to 1 hour, loosely covering with foil to prevent excess browning, if necessary. Let cool in pan for 5 minutes. Remove sides of pan, and let cool completely on base of pan on a wire rack. Dust with confectioners' sugar before serving.

**Unlike softened butter, room temperature butter should provide no resistance when pressed with a finger. At this point, the butter is softened enough to easily combine with your other ingredients.*

Notes: *Make sure to clean your scoop as needed when scooping your batter and frangipane. Alternatively, use 2 (1½-tablespoon) spring-loaded scoops.*

A wooden pick test does not work well for this cake; even when finished baking, the frangipane may still stick slightly to a wooden pick.

FRANGIPANE-JAM BUNS

Makes 12 buns

Classic almond frangipane gets an update with the addition of hazelnut flour in these luscious sweet buns. A crunchy vanilla-scented streusel tops these soft treats, which are brimming with homemade frangipane and tart raspberry jam.

- **2½ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour, divided**
- **¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar**
- **1 (0.25-ounce) package (7 grams) instant yeast***
- **1¾ teaspoons (5.25 grams) kosher salt**
- **⅓ cup (80 grams) warm whole milk (120°F/49°C to 130°F/54°C)**
- **2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature**
- **½ teaspoon (3 grams) vanilla bean paste**
- **6 tablespoons (84 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- **Hazelnut-Almond Frangipane (recipe follows)**
- **¼ cup (75 grams) seedless raspberry jam**
- **1 large egg yolk (19 grams)**
- **1 teaspoon (5 grams) water**
- **Vanilla Streusel (recipe follows)**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat 1 cup (125 grams) flour, sugar, yeast, and salt at low speed until combined, about 30 seconds. Add warm milk, and beat just until combined. Add eggs and vanilla bean paste; beat at medium-low speed until combined, about 1 minute, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, gradually add remaining 1½ cups (188 grams) flour, beating just until combined.

2. Switch to the dough hook attachment. Beat at low speed until smooth and elastic, 6 to 8 minutes. (Dough will be on the stiffer side at this point.) Add butter, 1 tablespoon (14 grams) at a time, beating until combined after each addition, 6 to 8 minutes total, and stopping to scrape sides of bowl and dough hook. (Dough may look slightly broken during this process but will come together later.) Increase mixer speed to medium-low; beat until a smooth, elastic dough forms, about 6 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl and dough hook. Turn out dough onto a clean surface, and knead 4 to 5 times. Shape dough into a smooth round.

3. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, 1 to 1½ hours.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

5. Punch down dough; cover and let stand for 5 minutes. Turn out onto a clean surface, and divide into 12 portions (about 50 grams each). Shape 1 portion into a smooth ball, pinching any seams to seal. (Keep remaining dough covered with plastic wrap to prevent it from drying out.) Repeat procedure with remaining dough. Press or roll each dough ball into a 3½-inch circle, and place 1½ to 2 inches apart on prepared pans. (Dough rounds may shrink slightly.) Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until puffed and dough holds an indentation when poked, 30 to 40 minutes.

6. Using a floured ¼-cup glass jar, make a 2¼-inch-wide, ¼- to ½-inch-deep well in center of each dough circle. (See PRO TIP.) Place 1 tablespoon (about 17 grams) Hazelnut-Almond Frangipane into each well, pressing to completely and evenly fill.

7. In a small bowl, whisk jam until smooth. Spoon about 1 teaspoon (6 grams) jam in center of frangipane on each bun, gently spreading into a circle as desired.

8. In another small bowl, whisk together egg yolk and 1 teaspoon (5 grams) water. Brush dough with egg wash. Crumble Vanilla Streusel over buns.

9. Bake until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center of bun registers 190°F (88°C), 10 to 14 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature.

**We used Red Star® Quick Rise Yeast .*

PRO TIP

If you don't have a ¼-cup glass jar, you can also use a 2¼-inch-diameter ⅓-cup dry measuring cup or even just your fingertips to make wells in dough rounds.

Hazelnut-Almond Frangipane

Makes about ¾ cup

- **¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar**
- **3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature***
- **⅓ cup (32 grams) superfine blanched almond flour**
- **⅓ cup (32 grams) finely ground hazelnut flour**
- **¼ cup (31 grams) all-purpose flour**
- **1 large egg white (30 grams)**
- **¼ teaspoon (1 gram) almond extract**
- **⅛ teaspoon kosher salt**

1. In a medium bowl, stir together sugar and butter until well combined. Add almond flour and all remaining ingredients, stirring until well combined.

**Unlike softened butter, room temperature butter should provide no resistance when pressed with a finger. At this point, the butter is softened enough to easily combine with your other ingredients.*

Vanilla Streusel

Makes ½ cup

- **2½ tablespoons (30 grams) granulated sugar**
- **2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, melted**
- **¼ teaspoon (1.5 grams) vanilla bean paste**
- **⅛ teaspoon kosher salt**
- **⅓ cup (42 grams) all-purpose flour**

1. In a medium bowl, stir together sugar, melted butter, vanilla bean paste, and salt. Stir in flour until well combined.

BAKE BETTER *Brownies*

CHOOSE YOUR OWN BROWNIE ADVENTURE—CAKEY, FUDGY, SWIRLED, OR "ALL THE WAY"—WITH OUR CUSTOMIZABLE, PERSONALIZED LOOK AT THE CLASSIC CHOCOLATE BAKED GOOD

PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLIAM DICKEY
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY LAURA CRANDALL
STYLING BY MARY BETH JONES

Cakey BROWNIES

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Peanut Butter-Chocolate Chunk Cakey Brownies
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Fudgy BROWNIES

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Cheesecake-Swirled Fudgy Brownies
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CAKEY BROWNIES

Makes about 9 brownies

If you're looking for a delicate crumb, bold cocoa flavor, and lofty height, our Cakey Brownies are the answer. Cocoa powder, not melted chocolate, gives these brownies their chocolate flavor, meaning they're less dense and less fudgy, with a matte, slightly crunchy top. We added milk to help tenderize the batter without weighing down the crumb. While still warm, this brownie will have a closer crumb texture, but as it cools, the crumb becomes more cake-like, soft and spongy. Think of this as a brownie version of devil's food cake—satiny and cocoa-rich but light as air.

- **1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar**
- **¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar**
- **¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, melted**
- **1¼ cups (156 grams) all-purpose flour**
- **1 cup (85 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder, sifted**
- **¾ teaspoon (3.75 grams) baking powder**
- **¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt**
- **¾ teaspoon (1.5 grams) instant espresso powder**
- **3 large eggs (150 grams), room temperature and lightly beaten**
- **2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**
- **½ cup (120 grams) whole milk, room temperature**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray an 8-inch square baking pan with cooking spray. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together sugars and melted butter until smooth and well combined.
3. In another medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, baking powder, salt, and espresso powder.
4. Slowly add eggs to sugar mixture, whisking until combined. Whisk in vanilla. Add flour mixture in three additions alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, stirring just until combined after each addition. Spread batter into prepared pan.
5. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out with a few moist crumbs, 35 to 40 minutes. Let cool in pan for 15 minutes. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack before cutting into bars. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 4 days.

PRO TIP
Each of these recipes was made in an 8-inch square baking pan, but if you're baking for a bigger crowd—or appetite—these recipes can easily be doubled to bake in a 13x9-inch baking pan. Simply double the recipe ingredients and, as a rule, increase your bake time by 5 to 10 minutes. Don't be nervous about the bake time wiggle room. Just be sure to use our visual test for doneness: a wooden pick inserted in center should come out with a few moist crumbs.

PEANUT BUTTER-CHOCOLATE CHUNK CAKEY BROWNIES

Makes about 9 brownies

Also known as the "All the Way Brownie," this recipe takes our cakey base brownie to the nth power, with chocolate chunks and peanuts stirred into the batter and a luscious Peanut Butter Frosting spread on top. To make it your own luxurious masterpiece, consider swapping in your favorite chocolate and nuts (keeping the mix-ins at 1 cup max). You could also toss in Candied Orange Peel (page 64) and chopped dark chocolate as your mix-ins, and use a silky ganache topping instead of the Peanut Butter Frosting. With this brownie, the chocoholic sky is the limit.

- **1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar**
- **¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar**
- **¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, melted**
- **1¼ cups (156 grams) all-purpose flour**
- **1 cup (85 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder, sifted**
- **¾ teaspoon (3.75 grams) baking powder**
- **¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt**
- **¾ teaspoon (1.5 grams) instant espresso powder**
- **3 large eggs (150 grams), room temperature and lightly beaten**
- **2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**
- **½ cup (120 grams) whole milk, room temperature**
- **½ cup (68 grams) roughly chopped dry-roasted peanuts**
- **½ cup (85 grams) 60% cacao semisweet chocolate chunks**
- **Peanut Butter Frosting (recipe follows)**
- **Garnish: roughly chopped dry-roasted peanuts, 60% cacao semisweet chocolate chunks**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray an 8-inch square baking pan with cooking spray. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together sugars and melted butter until smooth and well combined.
3. In another medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, baking powder, salt, and espresso powder.
4. Slowly add eggs to sugar mixture, whisking until combined. Whisk in vanilla. Add flour mixture in three additions alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, stirring just until combined after each addition. Fold in peanuts and chocolate chunks. Spread batter in prepared pan.
5. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out with a few moist crumbs, 35 to 40 minutes. Let cool in pan for 15 minutes. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
6. Spread Peanut Butter Frosting on top of cooled brownies. Garnish with peanuts and chocolate chunks, if desired, and cut into bars. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 6 days. Let come to room temperature before serving.

Peanut Butter Frosting

Makes about 1½ cups

- **½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- **½ cup (128 grams) creamy peanut butter**
- **½ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract**
- **1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar**

1. In a medium bowl, whisk butter until smooth. Add peanut butter and vanilla, whisking until well combined. Slowly whisk in confectioners' sugar until smooth and well-combined. Use immediately.

FUDGY BROWNIES

Makes about 9 brownies

If our Cakey Brownies are like satin, then think of our Fudgy Brownies as velvet. Melted chocolate and butter transform the texture of these brownies into pure decadence, with the boost of fat from the chocolate's cocoa butter enriching the crumb. An extra egg also bumps up the brownies' quota of fat. We still added a touch of cocoa powder to round out the flavor but nixed the milk, as there's plenty of fudgy richness already present. With a glossy top, dense interior, and chewy finish, these brownies are a natural crowd-pleaser.

- 8 ounces (226 grams) 60% cacao bittersweet chocolate, chopped
- ¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
- ¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 1¼ cups (156 grams) all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons (15 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder, sifted
- ¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
- ¾ teaspoon (1.5 grams) instant espresso powder
- 4 large eggs (200 grams), room temperature and lightly beaten
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract

1. Preheat oven to 325°F (170°C). Spray an 8-inch square baking pan with cooking spray. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In the top of a double boiler, combine chocolate and butter. Cook over simmering water, stirring occasionally, until melted and smooth. Turn off heat, and whisk in sugars until well combined. (Mixture will not be completely smooth.) Remove from heat, and let cool slightly, 3 to 5 minutes.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, salt, and espresso powder.
4. Slowly add eggs to chocolate mixture, whisking until combined. Whisk in vanilla. Fold in flour mixture just until combined. Spread batter in prepared pan.
5. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out with a few moist crumbs, 50 to 55 minutes. Let cool in pan for 15 minutes. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack before cutting into bars. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 6 days. Let come to room temperature before serving.

CHEESECAKE-SWIRLED FUDGY BROWNIES

Makes about 9 brownies

To double down on the extravagance of our Fudgy Brownies, we added a silky cheesecake swirl. We've kept the Cheesecake Layer classic vanilla, but you could go bold with flavors. Considering swapping in almond, peppermint, or even rum extract for the vanilla. You can also stir in ½ teaspoon of your favorite spice or spice mix, from chai spice mix to Chinese five-spice powder. Whatever you choose, these brownies receive full marks in both texture and presentation.

- 8 ounces (226 grams) 60% cacao bittersweet chocolate, chopped
- ¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
- ¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 1¼ cups (156 grams) all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons (15 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder, sifted
- ¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
- ¾ teaspoon (1.5 grams) instant espresso powder
- 4 large eggs (200 grams), room temperature and lightly beaten
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract*
- Cheesecake Layer (recipe below)

1. Preheat oven to 325°F (170°C). Spray an 8-inch square baking pan with cooking spray. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In the top of a double boiler, combine chocolate and butter. Cook over simmering water, stirring occasionally, until melted and smooth. Turn off heat, and whisk in sugars until well combined. (Mixture will not be completely smooth.) Remove from heat, and let cool slightly, 3 to 5 minutes.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, salt, and espresso powder.
4. Slowly add eggs to chocolate mixture, whisking until combined. Whisk in vanilla. Fold in flour mixture just until combined. Spread two-thirds of batter (about 2⅔ cups [about 760 grams]) in prepared pan. Spoon Cheesecake Layer on top of batter, smoothing flat with an offset spatula. Spoon remaining batter in large dollops (about 48 grams each) on top of Cheesecake Layer. Using a wooden pick, swirl layers together.
5. Bake until brownie on top is shiny, center is set, and a wooden pick inserted in brownie comes out with a few moist crumbs, 55 minutes to 1 hour and 5 minutes, covering edges with foil after 40 minutes of baking to prevent excess browning. Let cool in pan for 15 minutes. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack before cutting into bars. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 6 days. Let come to room temperature before serving.

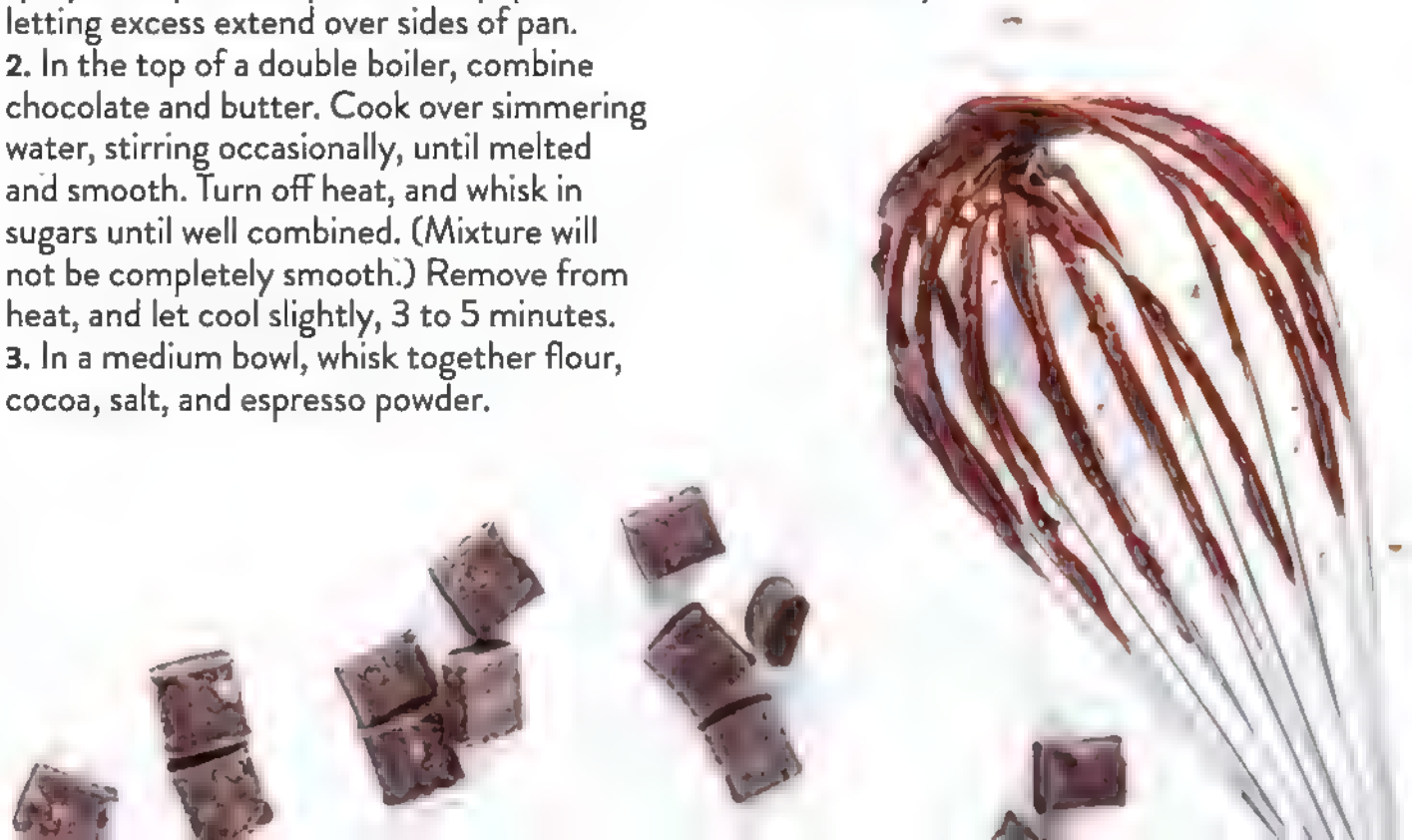
**We used Heilala Pure Vanilla Extract.*

Cheesecake Layer

Makes about 1½ cups

- 8 ounces (226 grams) cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons (16 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- 1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract

1. In a medium bowl, whisk cream cheese until smooth. Add sugar and flour, and whisk until combined; scrape sides of bowl. Add egg, whisking well. Whisk in vanilla. Use immediately.



MIKE'S GOLDEN RULES FOR BETTER BROWNIES

Mike Johnson, the baker behind *Mike Bakes NYC*, just came out with his game-changing cookbook, *Even Better Brownies* (Page Street Publishing, 2020). We tapped into his brownie brilliance, asking him for his top tips on how to make brownies all the better.

QUALITY CHOCOLATE IS KING. "Skip the generic baking chocolate, and spring for high-quality chocolate—both chocolate chips and baking bars. It'll transform both the taste and texture of your final baked good."

BABY YOUR BAKE TIME. "Brownies are sensitive creatures. Check your brownies 5 minutes before the called-for bake time, especially if your oven runs hot, because 5 minutes can mean the difference between moist brownies and dry brownies."

MAX OUT YOUR MIX-INS AT 1 CUP. "Whether its chopped chocolate, nuts, or candy, stir in no more than 1 cup of mix-ins to your base brownie batter. Much more and you'll start effecting how evenly your brownies bake. Keep in mind that you can always sprinkle some extra mix-ins on top of the still-warm brownies if you're craving more."

USE VANILLA AND ESPRESSO FOR OOMPH. "Coffee—espresso powder in particular—adds incredible depth to chocolate. Quality vanilla ups the ante, adding a contrasting yet complementary note to the cocoa."

PICTURE-PERFECT BROWNIES COME FROM PATIENCE AND PRECISION. "Wait for your brownies to cool, because slicing hot brownies is painful and messy. When I first started photographing my brownies, I used a ruler to create perfect cuts, and those neat edges photograph beautifully. Finally, clean your knife between cuts so you can really see your mix-ins and the luxurious texture of the brownies."

Blueberry Coffee Affogato

Double up on delicious blueberry flavor with this elegant dessert drink, a festive treat that makes the perfect end to any meal. Pour on the hot, freshly brewed New England Coffee® Blueberry Cobbler, top with fresh blueberries and enjoy scooping the ice cream up with a spoon before it melts. **MAKES 8 SERVINGS**

- 4 cups hot, brewed New England Coffee® Blueberry Cobbler
- 4 cups vanilla ice cream, divided
- 1 cup fresh blueberries, divided

Divide ice cream evenly in 8 (1-cup) glass mugs. Pour a half-cup of coffee over each mug of ice cream, top with blueberries and serve immediately with spoons.

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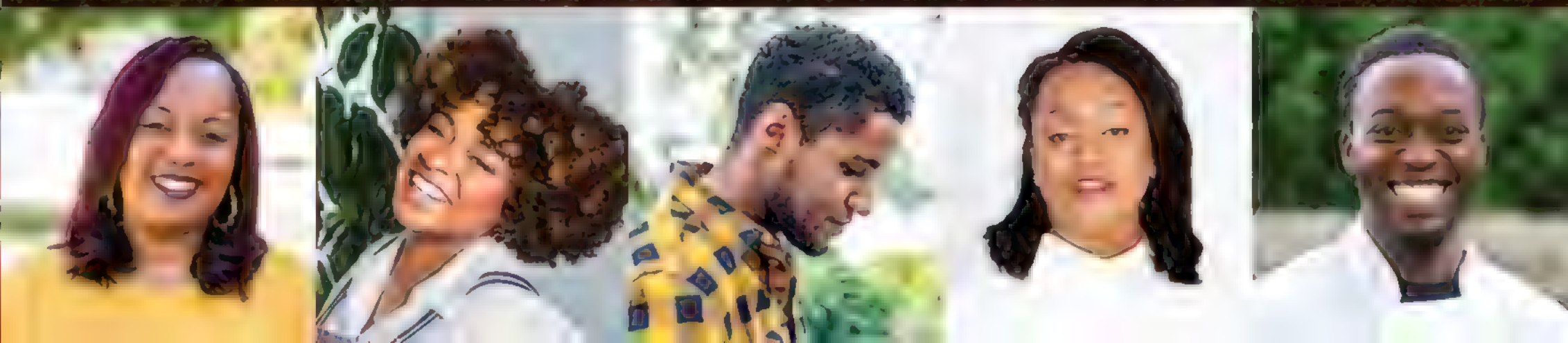
BY SANDI SHRIVER AND KYLE GRACE MILLS



THE GAME CHANGER

AUZERAIS BELLAMY

BLONDERY | BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

Bite into one of Auzerais Bellamy's gourmet blondies and you'll wonder how something so simple and comforting could also be so exquisite and refined. This butterscotch-rich baked good is an encapsulation of Auzerais's accomplished career as a pastry chef, a 10-year saga in the fine dining circuit including with the Thomas Keller Restaurant Group. When she met the fine dining glass ceiling, she broke through not by playing the game but by changing it entirely. She started her own business, Blondery, a bakery originally based out of her home kitchen, with four signature flavors available for order: Pecan and Salted Caramel, Brooklyn Blackout, Cinnamon Sugar, Birthday Cake. The classic Pecan and Salted Caramel Blondie is the base recipe she's been serving to her family for years, inspired by her favorite flavor for a blondie. "I wanted a blondie to taste like those incredible pecan pralines you can find in New Orleans," she says. With this blondie ideal packed into each golden square, it's unsurprising that Blondery turned into a smash sensation, picking up considerable steam during the COVID-19 pandemic shutdowns and stay-at-home orders. For Auzerais, the end game isn't necessarily a brick-and-mortar bakery in Brooklyn, New York. Instead, she relishes the freedom of a homegrown bakery that ships nationally and can launch pop-ups across the country. "Blondery can go anywhere, reach anyone," she says. At the time of this interview, Auzerais had 3,000-plus people on Blondery's waitlist. She's expanded her baking operations to a commercial bakery space, fighting to keep up with the hot demand. "I feel like the blondie has become the forgotten pastry," Auzerais notes. Thanks to Blondery, it's making a long-overdue comeback.

FOLLOW: *blondery.com*
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THE PIONEER

TAMARA ECKLES

JEM OF THE SOUTH | ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Tamara Eckles is a blogging expert, a mentor, and a pioneer. More than a decade has flown by since Tamara first created her baking blog, *Jem of the South*, which unleashed her passion for baking and teaching others. With the blog, she found a place where she could encourage her followers to "discover something sweet" because, as she says, "happy memories and togetherness are often centered around sweets." It may be difficult to imagine today, but Tamara entered the blogging world at a time when Twitter and personal websites were among the only options to share online baking content, and Instagram and Pinterest were just entering the scene.

Not only did Tamara help pave the way for baking bloggers with her drive and ingenuity, she also explored the world of podcasting relatively early. *Jem of the South Radio* provided an alternate venue where Tamara could network and reach fellow bakers, educating and inspiring those with similar dreams. Starting in 2011, she recorded more than 50 interviews with industry front-runners like chef Padua Player, a.k.a. SugaChef, and royal icing superstar Julia Usher. It takes a true leader to lift others up in the pursuit of their own passion, and without people like Tamara, our community centered around baking wouldn't be what it is today. For bloggers, podcasters, and bakers alike, Tamara is an inspiration—a true gem.

FOLLOW: *jemofthesouth.com*
INSTAGRAM: @jemofthesouth

THE BAKING SCIENTIST

CHERYL NORRIS

BAKES BY BROWN SUGAR
PORTLAND, OREGON

By day, Cheryl Norris works as a reliability engineer for a local eletric utility, but by night, she transforms into a baking scientist, turning her kitchen into a laboratory devoted to the study of flour and sugar. Her love for science is evident in everything she does, including her blog, *Bakes by Brown Sugar*. Even Cheryl's base recipe for Shortbread Cookies is an equation, using 12 ounces of flour, 8 ounces of butter, and 4 ounces of granulated sugar to create pure cookie perfection. As a self-proclaimed "baking science geek," she likes "understanding what makes a recipe work" so she can optimize and share the information. It's no wonder then why Cheryl's favorite cookbook is *The Cake Bible* by Rose Levy Beranbaum, a book brimming with the scientific explanations of baking. As a past contestant on the *Great American Baking Show*, Cheryl had the opportunity to showcase her talent and strengthen her knowledge of baking in different environments. So, how does Cheryl balance a full-time career with baking every chance she can get? To her, it's not a difficult equation at all. She loves engineering and she loves baking and teaching others, so it simply adds up to a life filled with passion—and sugar.

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THE POUND CAKE HEIRESS

APRIL McCLUNG

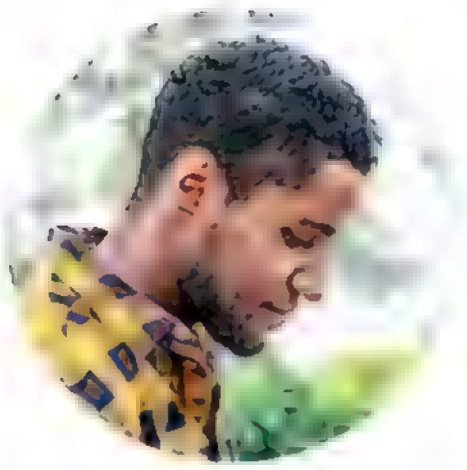
EMILY'S HEIRLOOM POUND CAKES
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

Raising $14,400 in nine months in order to give your children the chance to study abroad is no ordinary feat. But then again, April McClung, founder of Emily's Heirloom Pound Cakes, is no ordinary baker. She is a caring entrepreneur who believes passion, love, and, of course, butter are the secret ingredients to success and the perfect pound cake. Using an heirloom recipe passed down two generations from grandmother "Big Mama" Emily, April finds that she can "bring back precious memories with just one bite." Using only the best ingredients, she is often told that her cakes represent how all pound cakes should taste. Near perfection, her treats are light as air, moist, and have just the right amount of sweetness. Another bonus: the pound cakes have a shelf life of 15 days at room temperature or 20 to 30 days in the refrigerator. But let's all be honest here—once you have a taste, keeping the cake around that long is the ultimate game of self-control. The Original Heirloom Cake is the number one seller, but April also creates different flavors, like Key Lime,

Hawaiian, and Lemon Blueberry Buttermilk. Looking for the perfect pairing with your pound cake? Emily's Heirloom Pound Cakes now offers fresh bags of coffee for order—perfectly blended to match the delicate richness of the cakes. For online orders, choose from various flavors and sizes of pound cakes, or check out the coffee-and-cake combos.

FOLLOW: *emilysheirloompoundcakes.com*
INSTAGRAM: @emilyshpc

CHERYL NORRIS'S
MEYER LEMON
POPPY SEED CAKE



THE SOURDOUGH EXPLORER

BRYAN FORD

ARTISAN BRYAN | MIAMI, FLORIDA

When Bryan Ford's cookbook, *New World Sourdough*, first came out, it seemed to be perfect timing. The world was rediscovering the sourdough art during COVID-19 pandemic shutdowns and stay-at-home orders, and this baker with Honduran roots and a New Orleans, Louisiana, upbringing had just the cookbook to whet appetites. It became an instant best seller, providing Bryan the opportunity to donate 5% of profits to various charities that make a much-needed difference, like Black Women's Blueprint. The cookbook is a grand culmination of Bryan's work on his blog, *Artisan Bryan*, a deep dive into sourdough and bread-baking from various cultures and cuisines. Above all, Bryan hopes to introduce sourdough into a new, diverse context. "There are so many different cultures that have taken sourdough and made it their own. And there are so many breads that you can transform into sourdough," he says. Take his sourdough takes on two South American classics, *pan de coco* and *semitas de yema*. Both are delicious icons in their own right, but Bryan has introduced them to a new base in the form of fervent sourdough bakers. Recently, Bryan worked on a video companion to his smash cookbook, offering visual learners a new way to recreate his sourdough recipes. "I wanted to offer a literal hands-on experience for people who bought the cookbook," Bryan says. There's much more on Bryan's horizon, and you can bet it'll be coming with a heavy dusting of flour and a well-fed starter.

FOLLOW:
artisanbryan.com
INSTAGRAM:
@artisanbryan

THE TRAVELING BAKER

BRITNEY BROWN-CHAMBERLAIN

BRITNEY BREAKS BREAD
POTOMAC, MARYLAND

Consider Britney Brown-Chamberlain your virtual travel companion, bringing you to faraway places through thoughtfully created recipes inspired by world cuisines. Having visited more than 33 countries, this jet-setter draws inspiration for her blog, *Britney Breaks Bread*, from each region she encounters. From Blueberry Challah French Toast with Earl Grey Cream Cheese Icing to Peaches and Cream Filled Churros, you'll find recipes that blend flavors and cultures as well as ones that are "traditional with a twist." One look at Britney's gorgeous website and you would think that it's a full-time gig, but this entrepreneur seems to have boundless energy. With a graduate degree in clinical research organization and management, Britney spends her days as a cancer researcher and uses her free time to develop new recipes and perfect her photography—when she is not traveling, of course. At the time of this interview, Britney was also creating her first e-cookbook, a compilation of recipes (and wine pairings) aimed to guide readers through a breathtaking meal for guests. Travel along with Britney on her blog or check out her Instagram and newly released e-cookbook for continued inspiration.

FOLLOW: *britneybreaksbread.com*
INSTAGRAM: @britneybreaksbread

ESTELLE COLORED GLASS
STEPHANIE SUMMERSON HALL

THE ENTREPRENEUR

STEPHANIE SUMMERSON HALL

ESTELLE COLORED GLASS
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

The first notion Stephanie Summerson Hall had for Estelle Colored Glass occurred when she was settling into her new home, attempting to build a "forever collection" of furniture and household items that would be kept forever and passed down as heirlooms. She was struggling to find pristine colored glass like her grandmother Estelle used to collect from antiquing, jewels that always shown so brightly in her china cabinet. In an instant, Stephanie knew that if she wanted the glass she dreamed about, she'd have to create it herself. It began with a glass cake stand, a classic piece inspired by the ones Estelle would serve a from-scratch vanilla pound cake on after a family meal. Stephanie sent the prototype to her new business partner: a glass manufacturer in Poland that had been creating beautiful work for more than 100 years. She then sent the manufacturers colors, not from the typical color chart, but photos of haute couture pieces, from a lavender gown by Elie Saab to a rose-colored dress from Gucci. "All of my colors are inspired by fashion," Stephanie says. You can believe it as you admire the luxurious hues of her cake stands, flashing from intense royal blue to demure blush pink. "At the end of the day, I wanted to create something that felt like jewels you could display on your table, accompanying your homecooked meal," Stephanie says.

FOLLOW: *estellecoloredglass.com*
INSTAGRAM: @estellecoloredglass

THE SUGAR ARTIST

MAURICE SHELTON

BLACK ROSE PASTRIES
GARY, INDIANA

Many bakers were first introduced to Maurice Shelton as one of the victorious pastry chefs on the fast-paced baking competition show *Sugar Rush*. But this was just one of the many golds he's taken home in the sugar art department. Whether it's crafting an edible likeness of Lady Gaga's ensemble from the Met Gala or baking and decorating a 10-tier masterpiece covered in more than 70 sugar roses, Maurice treats sugar as the ultimate artistic medium. Affectionately called Chef Blāque (pronounced "blake") by his friends, Maurice runs an online bakery, Black Rose Pastries, when he isn't traveling the country competing and judging baking competitions. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Black Rose Pastries has been a sweet blessing to the Chicago, Illinois, area and neighboring communities, meeting the demand for celebratory wedding and birthday cakes as well as providing simple baked-to-order comfort. While Maurice is on the road for competitions, he's often accompanied by his son, Pierre. "I made it my goal when I became a father to always be active in my son's life. To me, that meant including him in my life in pastry," Maurice says. On a recent competition circuit, Maurice took Pierre on a grand road trip from Austin, Texas, all the way up San Francisco, California, with stops in Las Vegas, Nevada, and

Yosemite National Park, all the while nurturing his son's precocious talent. Since Pierre's first taste of the world of sugar art, he's gone on to win first place in the Junior Sculpted Cake division at the San Diego Cake Competition in California. "Now, whenever I go to an expo, everyone is asking, 'Where's mini me?' because Pierre has become my constant shadow. It's amazing to know the sugar community has embraced him the same way they've embraced me."

FOLLOW: *blackrosepastries.com*
INSTAGRAM: @chefblaque

THE JAM GENIUS

ASHLEY ROUSE

TRADE STREET JAM COMPANY
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

In a world of preconceived notions, Ashley Rouse hopes her jams will delightfully surprise you. Trade Street Jam Co.'s curated jam selection is anything but expected, offering everything from golden-hued Smoked Yellow Peach Jam to the pastel pink Plum & Rose Jam. The flavors are an ode to Ashley's professionally trained palette, like combining sweet fig and strawberry with fiery chipotle. The other secret to her success lies in the small batches she and her team create, each one getting the love and care any homemade jam would receive. On top of the scrupulous love, each Trade Street jam is certified vegan. "Our decision to make the jams vegan was about promising people that each of our jams is packed with only fruit and a ton of flavor," Ashley says. As for Ashley herself, half of the joy with Trade Street Jam Co. comes from the surprises she gets. "I'm a trained chef, so I felt like nothing much could surprise me with the way people use my jams. But people are still coming up with completely original ways to use it," she says. Although there

are endless ways to bake with her delicious jams, Ashley claims there are few things that beat the classic combo of sourdough and jam. "There's not much better in this world than a freshly baked slice of sourdough bread served with jam. Except for maybe an apple cake made with Blackberry Mulled Merlot Jam baked into the center," she says with a laugh.

FOLLOW: *tradestjamco.com*
INSTAGRAM: @tradestjamco

THE BOW TIE BAKER

CLYDE GREENHOUSE

KESSLER BAKING STUDIO
DALLAS, TEXAS

What do a baker, a bow tie, and a 1920s bungalow all have in common? They represent the bakery known as the Kessler Baking Studio based in Dallas, Texas. This sweet shop is owned and operated by Clyde Greenhouse, bow tie aficionado and 2020 James Beard Award nominee for Outstanding Baker. Clyde says it all started with just one fateful recipe: a chocolate chip pecan cookie he made for his sisters. Who knew that a rich, pecan-studded cookie could set into motion a series of events that included stepping away from a successful corporate career and entering into the passion-filled world of baking? Now, six years later, with more than 30 different recipes (and more than 200 bow ties), Clyde offers different flavor choices daily. Each recipe is crafted with only the highest-quality ingredients, like the Texas-shaped pecan shortbread cookie made with locally sourced butter and pecans. Stop by the Kessler Baking Studio storefront if you are in the area or peruse the online shop. Clyde ships nationwide, and with decadent treats like heart-shaped brownies and blondies, you can order up the perfect Valentine's treat for your loved ones near and far.

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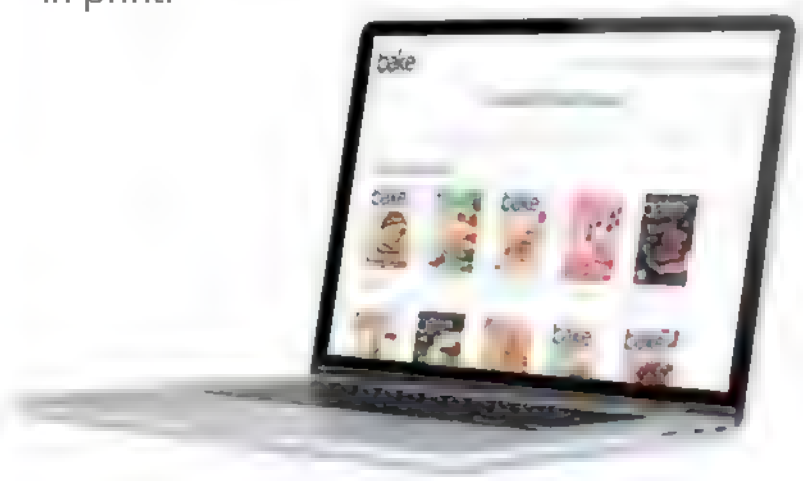

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origin of a classic

Benne Wafers

A LOOK AT THE ICONIC CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA, BISCUIT, FROM ITS AFRICAN ROOTS TO ITS AMERICAN HOME IN THE HOLY CITY

BY NNEKA M. OKONA

Crispy, crunchy, thin benne wafers are a common culinary currency in the Lowcountry city of Charleston, South Carolina. Both savory and sweet, benne wafers can vary in size and breadth. Some appear like saucers the size of a thin chocolate chip cookie, so thin they look like one bite will cause them to splinter in crumbs. Others are more bite-size, tiny, cute circles dotted with the benne seeds that give the wafers their signature flavor. Even what color benne wafers are varies—some the color of a deep caramel and others taking a lighter, cream hue.

But as varied in appearance as benne wafers are, at heart, they have a singular connection: enslaved Africans who found themselves thousands of miles away from home in a new, unknown place. *Benne* (pronounced "benny") is the Bantu word for "sesame," and in simple explanation, the benne seed is a varietal of an African sesame seed. Like many other crops and vegetables—such as sweet potatoes, okra, peanuts, and black-eyed peas—they traveled across Atlantic waters sometime during the early 1700s.

Botanist Dorothea Bedigian, Ph.D., of Missouri Botanical Garden has long written and researched about this history. For *African Ethnobotany in the Americas*, published in 2012, she wrote an introductory chapter about the Old-World connection of sesame, or its scientific genus Sesamum.

Though no reliable historical records exist to provide irrefutable evidence, common assumption is that the benne seeds themselves were brought to the Americas from the Caribbean, specifically Jamaica or Barbados. The majority of the enslaved Africans who arrived in Lowcountry South Carolina are thought to have hailed from these countries, which makes this assumption plausible. Over time, these seeds were planted and harvested by enslaved Africans, becoming an integral part of Lowcountry cuisine and a heritage food of the Gullah and Geechee people.

Benne seeds were more than mere sesame seeds, however. Legend has it that eating them was thought to bring the eater good luck and fortune. Sometimes benne seeds were given as gifts for this very reason. These seeds are also found quietly as an ingredient of a myriad of Lowcountry dishes—things like soups and stews—to thicken the consistency. Crushed sesame seeds create a fragrant oil. The leaves of the benne plant are said to aid in indigestion when mixed in a concoction of water until they become a slurry and slimy.

And slowly, the benne wafers themselves were born. It's a toss-up timewise concerning when the benne wafer first emerged as a crispy, crunchy, salty, and slightly nutty snack to be chomped on in Charleston. The common belief is that the wafers experienced a genesis during the antebellum period due to a lack of viability of the benne oil to replace the more common olive oil. Home bakers used this to their advantage to utilize an ingredient available in surplus. One of the earliest signs of both these home-based and brick-and-mortar food entrepreneurs was an article in a 1908 edition of the *Charleston Evening Post*. Within that year, Eleanor Williams started selling not only benne wafers she'd baked in her home but also benne brittle, benne sticks, and benne squares from her shop, Onslow's Candy Store, located on the ever-popular King Street in downtown Charleston. As the end of World War I crept by, more and more business owners started selling baked goods starring benne. It is said that by the spring of 1950, benne wafers could be purchased from Macy's department store in New York City. This trend continued as purveyors became renowned for this crispy,

crunchy, sweet, and savory snack, sold in clear crinkly bags—the same crinkly bags they're also sold in today.

Making these wafers is a rather easy feat and takes minimal ingredients. Combining toasted benne seeds with flour, butter, brown sugar, eggs, and vanilla with milk makes a light, airy dough that is then baked until it is crisp. Leaving them to cool on the baking sheet once they are browned yields a crisper wafer. Removing them to let cool on a wire rack makes for a softer, more pliable benne wafer.

An important distinction is that most of the widley available commercial benne seeds—which are commonly used to make benne wafers—have a milder taste. Heirloom benne was revived through the efforts of the company Anson Mills, known through the years to bring more elusive or long-forgotten Southern varietals back to the open market. They sell both raw heirloom benne seeds and a benne flour for baking needs. Begin your journey of discovery into this seed of the past through Anson Mills, a true portal into the greater African diaspora and a treat as delicious as it is historical.

Benne Wafers

Makes about 50 crackers

Recipe by Toni Tipton-Martin

Before the advent of baking powder and soda, beating biscuit dough with a wooden stick, hammer, or heavy rolling pin with up to one thousand whacks—a minimum of half an hour—to tenderize the dense paste was a common pathway to small, crisp "beaten biscuits." Remembered in the Slave Narratives *as "the grandfather of all afternoon tea refreshments," beaten biscuits held a place of honor in black cookbooks for generations, presumably because white families in the Old South always considered beaten biscuits a luxury, and a hostess's pride. The historian Arturo Schomburg's list of party dishes included them. Street vendors in New Orleans sold them, and beaten biscuits are the very first recipe in Abby Fisher's dignified collection from 1881,* What Mrs. Fisher Knows about Old Southern Cooking.

These crackers, perfect for dips and spreads, became easier to make with the introduction of baking soda and baking powder, and took on an African character when cooks stirred in sesame seeds—called benne by African slaves—which arrived in the Sea Islands in the early eighteenth century and were cultivated in their hidden gardens for nearly a century. By the time the authors of Charleston Receipts *published the recipe for the ethereal, seed-studded crackers in the mid-1950s, to which they gave the title Benne (Sesame) Seed "Cocktailers," the* New York Times *assured readers that this cocktail biscuit would "revolutionize cocktail parties."*

I serve benne wafers in a sweetgrass basket I purchased from a basket weaver near Boone Hall plantation in Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina. Weaving the baskets is a craft handed down through generations of Gullah/Geechee women that enabled their African ancestors to winnow rice or carry water from a brook, stream, or well to the kitchen house. It's my way of reconciling our artisanal past with its burdens.

- ½ **cup (64 grams) white sesame seeds**
- 2 **cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour, plus more for the work surface**
- 1 **teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder**
- ½ **teaspoon (3 grams) salt, plus more for finishing**
- ½ **cup (96 grams) shortening or lard, cut into ½-inch dice and chilled, plus more for greasing the baking sheet**
- 6 **tablespoons (90 grams) cold whole milk, plus more if necessary**

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Spread the sesame seeds in an even layer in the pan and toast until lightly browned and fragrant, about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent scorching. Watch carefully as the seeds burn easily. (The seeds also smoke as they toast.) Remove from the oven to cool completely, but leave the oven on and reduce the temperature to 350°F.
3. When the baking sheet has cooled to room temperature, lightly grease it or line with a clean sheet of parchment paper. Grease or line a second sheet for quick baking.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, and salt. Sprinkle the shortening pieces over the dry ingredients. Using your fingertips, a pastry blender, or two knives, cut the shortening into the dry ingredients, blending until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle the toasted seeds over the mixture. Stir with a fork to distribute evenly. Make a well in the center, add the milk, and use a fork to blend the dry ingredients and milk, sprinkling over more milk as needed to make a stiff, rough dough.
5. Scrape the dough onto a lightly floured board. With floured hands, knead the dough 15 to 20 seconds, until smooth. Divide the dough in half. Using a floured rolling pin, roll it out to slightly thinner than a dime. Cut the dough with a 1-inch biscuit cutter and transfer the rounds to the prepared baking sheets with a spatula. Re-roll the scraps, handling as lightly as possible, and cut out more rounds. Prick each round 2 times with a fork and sprinkle with additional salt, if desired.
6. Bake 10 minutes, until the dough rises slightly. Rotate the pans and continue to bake until light brown, 5 to 10 minutes longer. Immediately remove to wire racks to cool. Store the wafers in a tightly covered container for 2 to 3 weeks. Before serving, reheat the wafers 2 to 3 minutes in a 250°F oven.

Note: *To freeze benne wafer dough, shape it into a log and wrap it in parchment paper. To bake it, thaw slightly, slice it into ⅛-inch rounds and bake as directed.*

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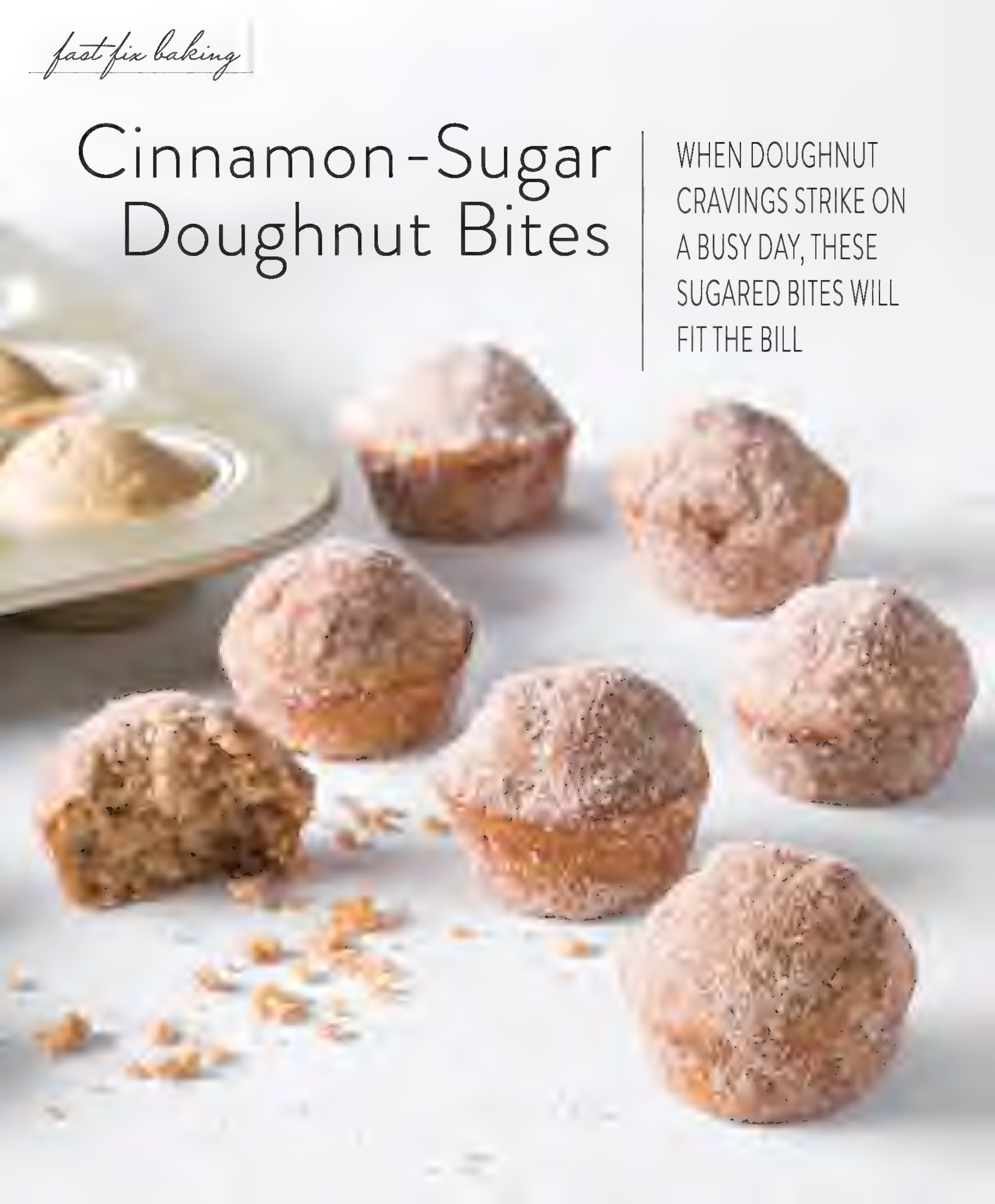
What Mrs. Fisher Knows About Old Southern Cooking
Abby Fisher was one of the first Black cookbook authors in the United States. About 100 copies of her seminal cookbook, *What Mrs. Fisher Knows About Old Southern Cooking*, were published in 1881. The cookbook featured recipes of her famous preserves and pickles, which she sold at her San Francisco, California, business, Mrs. Abby Fisher & Co. Though Abby could neither read nor write, each recipe was written in her voice, dictated to close friends in the San Francisco community. The cookbook was rediscovered in 1984 and reprinted in 1995, and remains one of the greatest records of the Black culinary tradition.

Cinnamon-Sugar Doughnut Bites

WHEN DOUGHNUT CRAVINGS STRIKE ON A BUSY DAY, THESE SUGARED BITES WILL FIT THE BILL



CINNAMON-SUGAR DOUGHNUT BITES

Makes 12 servings

Offering the sweet magic of a cake doughnut minus all the hassle of frying, these doughnut bites are baked in your trusty muffin pan. Then they're covered in melted butter before a luxurious roll in cinnamon-spiced sugar. The result? A crunchy-sweet exterior matched by a tender, moist interior, just like a doughnut.

½ cup (110 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar, divided
1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, melted and divided
3 tablespoons (42 grams) vegetable oil
1½ teaspoons (9 grams) vanilla bean paste*
2¼ cups (281 grams) all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda
½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground nutmeg
1¾ teaspoons (3 grams) ground cinnamon, divided
1 cup (240 grams) whole buttermilk, room temperature

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Spray a 12-cup muffin pan with cooking spray.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat brown sugar, ¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar, and egg at medium speed until lightened in color and well combined, 1 to 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add ¼ cup (57 grams) melted butter, oil, and vanilla bean paste; beat until well combined, 1 to 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, salt, baking soda, nutmeg, and ¼ teaspoon cinnamon. With mixer on low speed, add flour mixture to sugar mixture alternately with buttermilk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Divide batter evenly among prepared cups (about ¼ cup [about 70 grams] each). Firmly tap pan on a kitchen towel-lined counter several times to settle batter and release any air bubbles.
4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 12 to 18 minutes. Let cool in pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
5. In a small shallow bowl, place remaining ½ cup (113 grams) melted butter.
In a medium shallow bowl, stir together remaining ¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar and remaining 1½ teaspoons (3 grams) cinnamon. Roll a doughnut in melted butter; roll in cinnamon sugar. Repeat with remaining doughnuts. Serve immediately.

**We used Heilala Vanilla Bean Paste.*

TRISH ON DECK

OUR BAKING AND PASTRY EDITOR, TRICIA MANZANERO, IS HERE TO ANSWER ALL YOUR BURNING—LITERALLY OR FIGURATIVELY—BAKING QUESTIONS. HERE IS OUR INAUGURAL COLLECTION OF Q&AS FROM YOU, OUR READERS, TO TRICIA, OUR PRO!

What does "punch it down" actually look like for cinnamon rolls and breads?

—LINDSAY MAYFIELD, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

TRISH: "Punching down" a dough accomplishes a few things. It releases some gas bubbles produced by yeast during the dough's first rise. This deflation prevents gluten strands from overstretching (and subsequently collapsing) and can help give the bread a finer grain. To boot, sugars and moisture get redistributed along with yeast cells, providing fuel for the second rise. To "punch down," create a fist with your hand, and using your knuckles, gently push vertically down (without twisting) into the center of the dough. Pull the edges of the dough to the center and then turn the dough over. Cover the dough and let it rest for 5 to 10 minutes before shaping for the final rise.

Does egg size matter in baking?

—SKYE REZAC, VALPARAISO, NEBRASKA

TRISH: Yes! Most recipes—and every recipe developed and tested for *Bake from Scratch*—call for large eggs. Sans eggshell, the various sizes and their approximate weights are medium egg (47 grams), large egg (50 grams), extra-large egg (56 grams), and jumbo egg (60 grams). Thirteen grams separate the smallest and largest sizes—a tiny number at first. However, if you're making a recipe that calls for four eggs, that discrepancy is quadrupled. What was only 13 grams' difference is now 52 grams—that's like adding or losing an extra egg in the batter! If you've got anything on hand other than large eggs, I suggest weighing them before adding them in. That way, you can adjust as needed and ensure you use the right amount.

Why are my brownies always done around the edges and liquid in the middle?

—LINDSAY ROBERTS, TEMPERANCE, MICHIGAN

TRISH: While gooey brownies are great, raw brownies are something else entirely. Why the runny middle? The culprit might be your oven—it may not be running as hot as it should. In our test kitchen, we are total nerds when it comes to using thermometers, and our ovens are no exception. An oven thermometer can help you make sure your model is really set at the right temperature. For further wisdom, I talked to Laura Crandall—the talented test kitchen guru behind our Bake Better Brownies feature (page 85). She always recommends the wooden pick test rather than relying on a timer or just outer appearance. Using a wooden pick, prick the center of the brownie—if it comes out with moist crumbs, you're good to pull it. If it's still liquid, continue to bake your brownie, testing every 5 minutes until it has moist crumbs, not gooey batter, on the pick.

Why do my cookies always spread and flatten?

—THAMAYA, KANDY, SRI LANKA

TRISH: Several factors could cause flat cookies. Like our brownie question above, an improperly calibrated oven could be to blame. If your oven is actually running at a lower temperature than called for, your cookies will spread rather than set when they're supposed to. Invest in an oven thermometer to investigate. Too-soft butter or dough can also mean a faster spread. Same goes for over-creaming your butter. Try refrigerating your dough before baking, starting at 30 minutes and adjusting as needed. If you're not already, try ungreased baking sheets, and, of course, be sure they're cool before use. You can also analyze your recipe ratios. Too little flour, too much butter, or an excess of sugar, for example, could all cause cookies to spread. Try adding or reducing one of these, 1 to 2 tablespoons at a time, as needed.

How long should I mix and what texture am I looking for when I make scones or biscuits?

—GENIE, GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA

TRISH: Restraint is key when it comes to mixing scone or biscuit dough. Once you've cut your cold fat into your flour mixture and added your liquid ingredients, use a fork to stir just until dry ingredients are moistened. Your dough may—and often should—still look shaggy, dry, or rough in parts. Resist that urge to keep stirring, or sad, tough baked goods could ensue. Instead, turn your dough out onto a surface, lightly flouring if needed, and gently fold or pat it just until it comes together. You're aiming for a cohesive mass, not necessarily for all ingredients to be super smooth and thoroughly combined. From there, simply shape, cut, and bake as directed.

Have a baking question for Trish? Email us at *bakefromscratch@hoffmanmedia.com* and your question could be featured in our next issue!

Spiced Tea & Rum Hot Toddy

When it's cold outside, help everyone stay warm and cozy with hot drinks for sipping. For parties, keep this delicious toddy hot by serving it out of a slow cooker set on low. **MAKES ABOUT 1 QUART**

- 1 large orange
- 2 cups water
- 1 Luzianne® Family Size Iced Tea bag
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 whole cloves
- ½ cup sugar
- 1¼ cups orange juice, preferably freshly squeezed
- 1 cup dark rum

1. Zest the orange in long strips. (Reserve remaining orange for another use.)
2. In a large pot, add water and orange zest and bring to a boil.
3. Add tea bag, cinnamon stick and cloves, turn off heat and allow to steep for 15 minutes.
4. Remove tea bag, orange peels and spices from pot with slotted spoon.
5. Add sugar, orange juice and rum; stir and cook over low heat to desired serving temperature, 1-2 minutes.
6. Pour into mugs and serve.

More tea recipes, tips & ideas at luzianne.com

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